

THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD • BRILL

Jews in an Iberian Frontier Kingdom

Society, Economy, and Politics in
Morvedre, 1248-1391

Mark D. Meyerson



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JEWS IN AN IBERIAN FRONTIER KINGDOM

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VOLUME 20



JEWS IN AN IBERIAN FRONTIER KINGDOM

*Society, Economy, and Politics
in Morvedre, 1248-1391*

BY

MARK D. MEYERSON



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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

*In memory of my grandparents
Sidney and Dora Meyerson*

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó
ARV	Arxiu del Regne de València
AMV	Arxiu Municipal de València
APPV	Archivo de Protocolos del Patriarca de Valencia
AMC	Arxiu Municipal de Castelló de la Plana
AM Vil	Arxiu Municipal de Vila-real
C	Cancilleria Reial
CR	Cartes Reiales
B	Bailia
MR	Maestre Racional
MC	Manuals de Consell
LM	Lletres Missives
JC	Justicia Criminal
JCivil	Justicia Civil
P	Protocolos
M.	Manus (= quire)
b.	sou(s) of Barcelona (Catalonia)
j.	sous(s) of Jaca (Aragon)
Baer, <i>Die Juden</i>	F. Baer, <i>Die Juden im christlichen Spanien. Urkunden und Regesten</i> , 2 vols. (Berlin, 1929–36).
Régné	J. Régné, <i>History of the Jews in Aragon. Regesta and Documents (1213–1327)</i> , ed. Y. Assis (Jerusalem, 1978).
Burns, <i>Diplomatarium</i>	R.I. Burns, <i>Diplomatarium of the Crusader Kingdom of Valencia: The Registered Charters of Its Conqueror, Jaume I, 1257–1276</i> (Princeton, 1991).
Hinojosa, <i>Jews</i>	J. Hinojosa Montalvo, <i>The Jews of the Kingdom of Valencia, from Persecution to Expulsion, 1391–1492</i> (Jerusalem, 1993).

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GLOSSARY

- adelantat*: an executive official in a Jewish or Muslim community.
alatma: ban imposed by the Jewish community (see *nitduy*).
aljama: a legally constituted Jewish or Muslim community, analogous to a Christian municipality (or *universitas*).
alqueria: hamlet; small agricultural settlement.
amîn: an official in a Muslim community with fiscal and policing functions.
besant: poll tax paid by Muslim subjects in the kingdom of Valencia.
censal: a mortgaged loan, widely used in the Crown of Aragon from the mid-fourteenth century.
censalista: purchaser of a *censal* and recipient of the annuity.
cisa: indirect tax on the sale of foodstuffs and on other transactions.
clavari: treasurer in the Jewish *aljama*.
consell: municipal or communal council.
converso: Jewish convert to Christianity, especially after 1391.
cotum: official rate of interest for Jewish lenders set by the crown.
fanecada: unit of measure equal to 831 square meters.
Fuero: the law code of the kingdom of Aragon.
Furs: the law code of the kingdom of Valencia.
halakhah: Jewish law.
herbatge: grazing fee levied on livestock.
jovada: unit of measure equal to 36 *fanecades* (see *fanecada*).
jueria: Jewish quarter.
jurat: an executive official of a Christian municipality.
kasher: ritually fit according to Jewish law.
maestre racional: auditor of the royal accounts.
malshin, *malsin*: an informer.
malshinut: the act of informing.
matzah: unleavened bread eaten by Jews on Passover.
moreria: Muslim quarter.
Mudejar: a Muslim living under Christian rule in Iberia.
mustaçaff: municipal official in charge of the market.
nitduy: ban imposed by the Jewish community.
peita: property tax.
pena del quart: a fine collected from a dilatory debtor equivalent to one-quarter of the sum owed.
seder: the Passover meal.
terme: municipal district.

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NOTE ON NAMES AND MONEY

Since the Jewish and Christian inhabitants of the kingdom of Valencia were Catalan-speaking, I have used the Catalan forms of their names whenever possible. I have done the same for toponyms (e.g., Morvedre instead of Murviedro; Xàtiva rather than Játiva; etc.). When persons or places were Castilian or Aragonese, I have used the Castilian or Aragonese forms.

In order to enable readers to follow Valencian Jewish individuals and families over the course of many years or generations, I have regularized the forms of their surnames, using the forms that most commonly appear in the documents (e.g., Avincanes instead of Abencanyes or Hincanes; Asseyo rather than Asseu or Asseo; etc.). I have also regularized the spelling of their given names for the sake of consistency and identification (e.g., Jahudà instead of Jaffuda; Isaac rather than Içach; etc.) Adhering to the inconsistent and variable orthography of the documents would only confuse the readers.

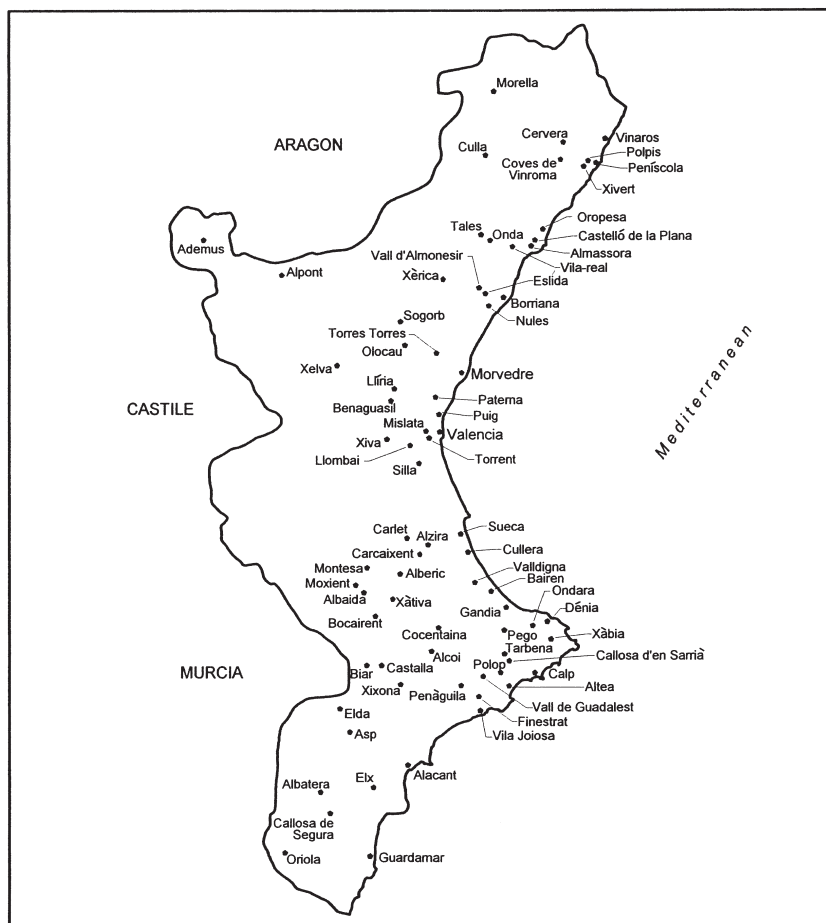
Again, for the sake of clarity, I have used the Catalan names and numeration of the rulers of the kingdom of Valencia. Even Valencian scholars writing in Catalan use the Catalan and not the Valencian numeration. Hence, for Pere the Ceremonious, I use "Pere III" and not the Aragonese Pedro IV or the Valencian Pere II. However, for the kings of the Castilian Trastámara dynasty, I have used the Castilian forms of their names, the names by which they were commonly recognized: Fernando I, Alfonso IV, Juan II, and Fernando II.

As for money, all sums mentioned in this study are in the currency of the kingdom of Valencia, except when specifically indicated by "sous b." for the "sous of Barcelona," the currency of Catalonia, or by "sous j." for the "sous of Jaca," the currency of the kingdom of Aragon. Throughout the Crown of Aragon, 1 lliura (or pound) = 20 sous; and 1 sous = 12 diners.

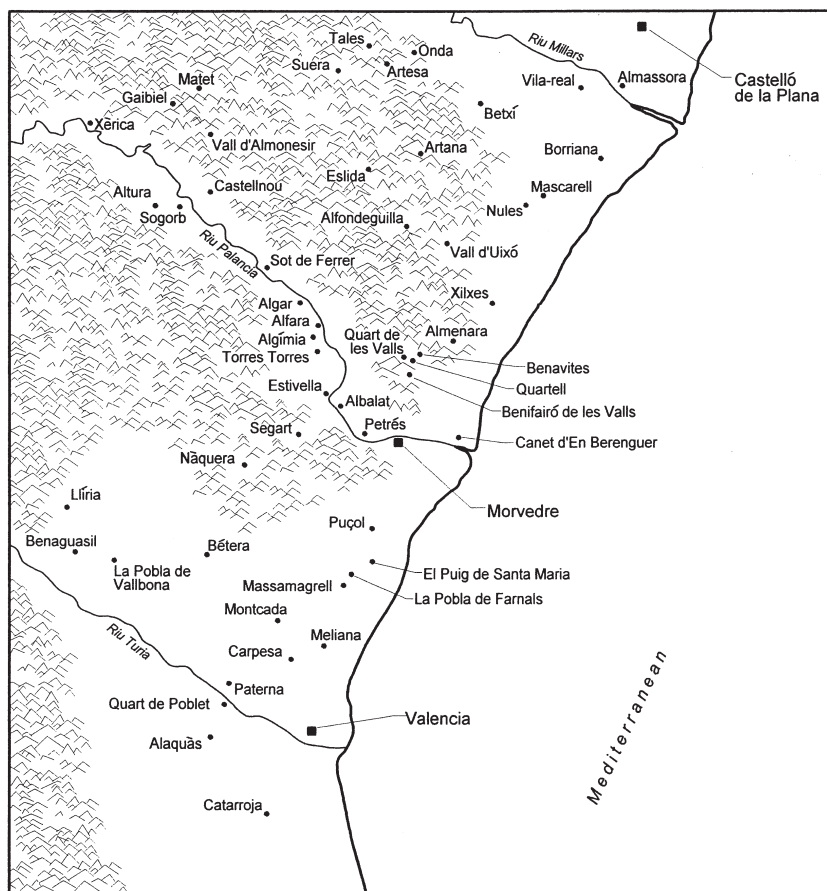
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Map 1: The Iberian Peninsula in the Later Middle Ages



Map 2: The Kingdom of Valencia



Map 3: The Region between the Turia and Millars Rivers, the Main Sphere of Action of the Jews of Morvedre

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INTRODUCTION

For medieval European Jews, settlement in frontier zones or kingdoms usually meant new opportunities and a relative freedom from discrimination and persecution. Functioning as economic and cultural intermediaries, Jews could make the best of their position as neutral parties in the struggles between competing states, religions, and civilizations, especially Latin Christendom and Islamdom. The location of Jewish communities on either side of the frontier separating the Christian and Muslim worlds facilitated Jewish commerce across political and religious boundaries; Jewish traders operating in this network necessarily developed an ability to adjust linguistically and culturally to a variety of settings. The Jews' adaptability and malleability made them particularly useful to rulers establishing new realms in frontier regions. These rulers required dependable settlers and servants possessing the economic experience and linguistic skills such as could help them to develop and administer newly acquired territories inhabited by multiple religious and ethnic groups.¹ The Jews who migrated to the lands conquered by the Christian kings of Castile-León and Aragon-Catalonia often met these needs.² Among the immigrants were the Jews who in the thirteenth century colonized Morvedre (modern Sagunto), a town located in the new Christian kingdom of Valencia. They are the subject of this book.

A Jewish community whose history began only after King Jaume I of Aragon-Catalonia carved his Valencian kingdom out of the Muslims' *Sharq al-Andalus*, the Jews of Morvedre will immediately be categorized, along with other Jewish communities in Christian Spain,

¹ On medieval frontier societies and kingdoms, see the recent discussions of R.I. Burns, "The Significance of the Frontier in the Middle Ages," in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. R. Bartlett and A. MacKay (Oxford, 1989), 317–339; D. Abulafia, "Introduction: Seven Types of Ambiguity, c. 1100–c. 1500," in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. D. Abulafia and N. Berend (Aldershot, 2002), 1–34; and N. Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and 'Pagans' in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000–c. 1300* (Cambridge, 2001), 6–41. Berend's study of the roles of non-Christians, particularly Jews, in the Hungarian frontier kingdom offers useful points of comparison with the situation in Iberian frontier realms.

² Y. Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, trans. L. Schoffman, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1961), 1: 46–185, is the classic treatment of these developments.

as a particular species of medieval European Jewry. Indeed, the authors of recent syntheses regard the Jews of the Spanish Christian kingdoms as *sui generis*, so much so that they scarcely treat them at all—except when their history intersects with that of other European Jews, that is, when they were being violently attacked or expelled. Because the Jews of Christian Spain were for the most part descendants of Andalusî Jews whose culture was profoundly influenced by Arabo-Islamic culture, and because they inhabited kingdoms that were forged through centuries of frontier warfare, and ultimately wars of conquest, against Muslim al-Andalus, their history cannot be easily fit into the framework of medieval European Jewish history. The Jews of Castile and the Crown of Aragon are, just like the kingdoms themselves, thought to have had a unique frontier experience, an experience that involved an often fruitful and sometimes pacific mingling of peoples, religions, and cultures. Not only were their cultural roots and surroundings different, these Jews, it is argued, also suffered less from Christian anti-Judaism than did their trans-Pyrenean counterparts.³

Historians of the Jews of medieval Christian Spain also recognize the frontier, and conditions in the newly conquered frontier kingdoms, as fundamental to the development of Jewish society, institutions, and culture—for good or ill. Many regard the era of the frontier kingdoms—extending from the later twelfth century through the first quarter of the fourteenth century—as a kind of “golden age” for the Jews of Christian Spain. In this period, when new societies and institutions were in the making, Jews contributed to the economic expansion of conquered and colonized territories; they held government offices and assisted kings in the elaboration of their fiscal administration; and they circulated at royal courts, serving kings as translators, physicians, and diplomats. The Jews, in sum, enjoyed a level of power, wealth, and influence, as well as a freedom from persecution, unrivalled by Jews elsewhere in medieval Europe.⁴

Frontier kingdoms, however, did not remain frontier kingdoms forever. They, and the cities, towns, and villages comprising them,

³ E.g., K.R. Stow, *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 1992); and M.R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1994).

⁴ Baer, *History*, vol. 1; Y. Assis, *The Golden Age of Aragonese Jewry: Community and Society in the Crown of Aragon, 1213–1327* (London, 1997); or, in a more popular vein, J. Gerber, *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience* (New York, 1992).

changed. They developed and “matured,” gradually losing their colonial character and becoming, in certain respects, replicas of the homelands of the Christian conquerors.⁵ Such a process occurred in the kingdom of Valencia within a century or so of its conquest by King Jaume I. The kingdom’s metamorphosis is most clearly evinced in the tumultuous political relationship and shifting demographic weight of its Muslim and Christian populations.

The Christian kingdom of Valencia originated in King Jaume’s crusade against the Sharq al-Andalus, the eastern region of Muslim Spain whose principal city was Valencia. Ruled by the Almohad governor Abû Zayd, the region included other important centers like Borriana, Morvedre (Arabic Murbîtar), Alzira, Xàtiva, and Dénia. This Muslim polity, however, was weakened by political division and turmoil. By the time King Jaume began his crusade in earnest, in 1232, the Almohad Abû Zayd had already lost Valencia, and Morvedre as well, to the ‘Abbasid-oriented rebel Ibn Mardanîsh, or Zayyân. Zayyân’s success had driven Abû Zayd into an alliance with King Jaume; the Almohad became Jaume’s puppet and eventually converted to Christianity. After gaining control of the northern part of the Valencian region, King Jaume advanced on Valencia city. His hosts defeated the forces of Zayyân at the decisive battle of Puig, or Anîsha, in August 1237. Valencia surrendered to Jaume the following year. The crusading king completed the conquest of the southern part of what was to become his new kingdom over the course of the next several years.⁶

The kingdom of Valencia began as a colonial regime, in which Christian kings and lords, aided by Christian and Jewish administrators, ruled over a subjugated Muslim population while fostering the settlement of Christian and Jewish immigrants from Catalonia and the kingdom of Aragon. The colonists mainly occupied the towns from which most of the Muslim inhabitants had either been ejected or chosen to emigrate. Although many Muslims of the political and cultural elite had willingly abandoned the Valencian region for Islamic lands after the conquest, most of the conquered Muslims stayed, a

⁵ R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (Princeton, 1993), 58, 307–309.

⁶ A. Huici Miranda, *Historia musulmana de Valencia y su región. Novedades y rectificaciones*, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1969–70), 3: 219–270; and R.I. Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders: Colonial Survival in the Thirteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia* (Princeton, 1973), 11–45.

few in urban Muslim quarters but the great majority in rural villages under the lordship of Christian seigneurs. The remaining Muslims, or Mudejars, comprised approximately eighty percent of the kingdom's population in the thirteenth century; their communities were sparsest north of the Millars River and densest south of the Xúquer River.⁷ The Muslims were restive: from the 1240s through the 1270s they made several unsuccessful attempts to throw off the yoke of their Christian overlords.

Meanwhile, King Jaume bequeathed to the kingdom a law code, the *Furs*, which was heavily influenced by Roman law, and he laid the foundations of a royal administration. With royal sanction, Christian settlers formed town governments, which soon enough were dominated by oligarchies and represented in the kingdom's Corts, or representative assembly. Jewish communities in urban centers also organized their own corporate *aljamas*. In the countryside, Christian seigneurs tightened their grip on the Muslim peasantry, sometimes taking advantage of the rebellion of the latter to modify the original surrender agreements. The Valencian church efficiently established its diocesan structure and parish networks while the mendicant orders set up their houses and exposed the colonists to the most vital expressions of thirteenth-century Catholic spirituality.

The upheaval and fluidity of these decades of colonization gave way to greater calm and the consolidation of Christian authority in the fourteenth century. As a result of Christian and Jewish immigration and Muslim emigration, by mid-century the Mudejars constituted only one-half of the realm's population. By this time the kingdom was no longer precariously colonial but securely part of the federated Crown of Aragon and unmistakably Christian in its public character, despite the still considerable Muslim presence. In fact, serious threats to the kingdom's stability and survival came not from rebellious Mudejars or foreign Muslim princes, but first, in 1347–48, from local Christians who formed the Valencian Union and revolted against royal authority, and then, in the 1350s and 1360s, from invading Castilian armies. The kingdom survived both the Union's insurrection and the Castilian onslaught to become, in the fifteenth century, the monarchy's most reliable source of revenue. Its capital

⁷ J. Torró, *El naixement d'una colònia. Dominació i resistència a la frontera valenciana (1238–1276)* (Valencia, 1999) is the most recent treatment of the kingdom's early history; 107–109, for Mudejar demography and geography.

city, Valencia, would emerge as the Crown of Aragon's leading port.

The Jews who settled in Morvedre formed one of several Jewish *aljamas* in the kingdom of Valencia. Their community was typical of Jewish communities in the Iberian frontier kingdoms: it was medium-sized; it included royal officials, moneylenders, merchants, artisans, and farmers who made the best of the fluid frontier conditions; and it was under the protection of—indeed was the possession of—the monarchy. This book, the first of two volumes treating the history of the Jews of Morvedre, focuses on the life of the community in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁸ It aims to show how the Jews were affected by the rapid and momentous changes the Valencian realm underwent as it was transformed from an unsteady colony into a secure Christian kingdom. It ends just before 1391, a watershed of murder and mass conversion for the Jews of Christian Spain.

The story usually told of the Jews in the Spanish kingdoms is that the expansion of the kingdoms in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries ushered in, as noted above, a Jewish “golden age” in economic, social, and cultural terms. Sometime in the second quarter of the fourteenth century the golden age began to tarnish: once there were Christians to perform many of the tasks Jews had fulfilled, Jews were deemed less useful and edged out of position and power; once Christian society matured and gained a fuller sense of Christian identity and a more vigorous spirituality, Jews were increasingly excluded, harassed, and persecuted. Late in the fourteenth century and on through the fifteenth century, tarnish became decay: Christian mob violence, conversion, spiritual and cultural malaise, and finally expulsion. It is in this period of decay, punctuated by the dates 1391 and 1492, that the history of the Jews of Christian Spain overlaps with the history of trans-Pyrenean Jewry—or so it appears in the eyes of historians of medieval European Jewry, even of those who deliberately exclude Sephardic Jewry from their narratives. When these scholars grapple with issues of persecution, exclusion, the movement to jural and religious uniformity, and the inevitability of the banishment of the Jews from western Europe, the Jews of Christian Spain suddenly become part of a comprehensive teleology.⁹

⁸ M.D. Meyerson, *A Jewish Renaissance in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, 2004) treats the 1391–1492 period.

⁹ Stow, *Alienated Minority*, 241, 280–281; Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, xx; Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 220, 236–240; and N. Berend, “Medieval Patterns of Social Exclusion

This book modifies the aforementioned chronology of Sephardic history and challenges the narratives of medieval European Jewish history in regard to the place they give to the historical experience of Sephardic Jewry. First of all, it takes a lot of luster off the so-called golden age by showing, if such an age existed, just how brief it was—some thirty or forty years. It analyzes the social, political, economic, and religious forces that quickly undermined or severely limited Jewish success. In doing so, the book raises questions as to how unique the Jewish experience in the Spanish kingdoms was. If the Jews were removed from office, relegated to an inferior position, and systematically humiliated just as soon as Valencian Christians acquired the requisite security, political organization, and identity as a Christian socioreligious body, then it suggests that the Jews of Christian Spain were affected, or afflicted, by the same ideological and institutional factors that made Jewish life so insecure and frequently miserable north of the Pyrenees—and this quite early in the fourteenth century, long before 1391. The book asks, in other words, is what distinguishes the history of the Jews in Christian Spain from that of their coreligionists in the rest of Europe, so far as the Jews' relations with Christians are concerned, merely a chronological lag, a happy delay afforded the Jews of Spain by the centuries of frontier warfare, conquest, and colonization before they too were inevitably swept away by violent persecution and expulsion?¹⁰

The answer provided by this book, and by the volume treating the post-1390 period, is a qualified “no.” The Jews of Morvedre, and their brethren throughout the Crown of Aragon, certainly did suffer marked degradation and humiliation in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. But the Jews' position in Christian society did not decline unremittingly from this period until the expulsion of 1492. 1492 in Christian Spain was not simply a delayed re-enactment of 1290 in England and 1306 in France, that is, “once Christian Spain had taken on most of the attitudes of the North

and Integration: The Regulation of Non-Christian Clothing in Thirteenth-Century Hungary,” *Revue Mabillon*, n.s. 8 (1997), 156–157, whose call for case studies characterized by nuance and attention to context (176) seems to apply only to the pre-1300 period.

¹⁰ Here I would seem to be in agreement with the position of M. Kriegel, *Les juifs à la fin du Moyen Âge dans l'Europe méditerranéenne* (Paris, 1979), as discussed and challenged by Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 102–103, 237 n. 86.

toward Jews.”¹¹ In the Spanish kingdoms—and in the Crown of Aragon more than Castile—Christian subjects and their kings were occupied less with the question of whether Jews should exist among them than with the question of what place the Jews should occupy in local and regional societies. Once this question was resolved to the satisfaction of Christians—that is, once Jews were put in a clearly inferior position—then Christians did not push for the removal of the Jews. The problem that Isabel of Castile and Fernando of Aragon sought to address with the expulsion of 1492 was again the problem of Jews not being in their appropriate place, only in this case the “Jews” in question—the Jews out of place—were the Judaizing *conversos* who dangerously straddled the hitherto clear divide between Judaism and Christianity, and the unbaptized Jews who influenced them.¹² The attempt to resolve this large and unusual problem was quite different from what the English and French monarchs had hoped to achieve with their expulsions.

Iberian Christians, or at least those in certain areas, operated under a different set of social assumptions, which were rooted in their understanding of their own history and social environment and of the place that Jews and Muslims had in both. In other words, the frontier, and the kingdoms created as crusading kings pushed it further south, did matter. New plural societies were engendered, societies quite distinct from what existed in the north. There were new realities on the ground, new ways of coping with ideological antagonism, new customs and traditions. Just what happened in these frontier kingdoms, in these new societies, can be uncovered and examined only through painstaking local studies. Then it will become clearer why the experience of the Jews of Morvedre was in some ways so similar to what Jews experienced elsewhere in Europe but in others unique to Christian Spain, or to the Crown of Aragon, or even to the kingdom of Valencia.

Chapter One treats the early settlement of Jews in post-conquest Morvedre and the steady growth of a Jewish community there through

¹¹ Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, xx.

¹² M. Kriegel, “La prise d’une décision: l’expulsion des juifs d’Espagne,” *Revue historique*, 260 (1978), 49–90; and M.D. Meyerson, “Religious Change, Regionalism, and Royal Power in the Spain of Fernando and Isabel,” in *Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Robert I. Burns, S.J.*, ed. L. Simon (Leiden, 1995), 96–112.

the first quarter of the fourteenth century. It gives much attention to the important role played in colonial Morvedre by the crown's Jewish bailiffs, and it explores the complex relationship between Jews, Christians, and Muslims as the two settler communities laid the foundations of a new economy and society. Chapter Two analyzes the political reaction of the Christian citizenry against Jewish power and the removal of Jews from government office toward the end of the thirteenth century. It shows that the process of putting the Jews in what Christians regarded as their proper, inferior place also involved—indeed was inherent in—the Christians' development of a sense of community centered on parish life and Eucharistic devotion. The powerful, polyvalent symbol of the Body of Christ impelled Christians to exclude and humiliate the Jews in their midst. Chapter Three examines an aspect of Jewish degradation that is absolutely crucial for understanding the evolution of the Jews' political and social life, their economic pursuits, and their relations with Christians—namely, their servitude to the monarchy. Although the Jews, as the “royal treasure,” benefited from a level of royal privilege and protection serfs did not enjoy, they were nonetheless deemed the king's property, bound to the king even more tightly than were serfs to their seigneurs, for the purpose of fiscal exploitation.¹³ The chapter offers a detailed analysis of how the necessity of paying often exorbitant royal taxes shaped the life of the Jewish community, engendering an obsessive, occasionally vicious “fiscal politics” and ultimately depleting the resources of the corporate *aljama*. The Jews, however, were not compliant, immobile objects of exploitation. The chapter demonstrates how Jewish families developed strategies for evading some of the monarchy's fiscal demands. Highly mobile and politically astute, they dispersed their assets widely in a number of towns and on the estates of nobles and knights with whom they forged firm ties. Chapter Four considers the phenomenon of Jewish moneylending, a nearly inescapable livelihood that the Jews' fiscal servitude to the monarchy required. The Jews were locked into the uncomfortable position of having to provide needed credit to Christians and Muslims, and then collecting debts from their clients, with interest, in order to subsidize the king. As the chapter shows, few emerged content from

¹³ Stow, *Alienated Minority*, 274, 278; D. Abulafia, “The Servitude of Jews and Muslims in the Medieval Mediterranean: Origins and Diffusion,” *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome (moyen âge—temps modernes)*, 112 (2000), 687–714.

this troubled triangular relationship, except perhaps the king. Yet in the later fourteenth century the introduction of new credit mechanisms (*censal* and *violari*) challenged the Jews' position as the principal purveyors of credit; perforce and by choice the Jews began to extricate themselves from the yoke of usury. Chapter Five treats the impact of the revolt of the Union of Valencia (1347–48) and the Castilian occupation of Morvedre (1363–65) on the Jews. The analysis of the Union's attack on the Jewish quarter of Morvedre sheds much light on the Jews' social and political position as royalists—not simply because they were the king's Jews but by virtue of their close relationship with leading royalist nobles and knights. In fact, such ties with the Christian elite, and the possibility of taking refuge on their estates, emboldened the Jews to defy the monarch when they felt taxes to be too burdensome. The king, Pere III, nonetheless remained convinced of the value of his Jewish subjects, so that when he recovered Morvedre from the Castilians in 1365, the Jews were essential to his plans for the post-war reconstruction of the town. The Conclusion considers the situation of the Jews in a reconstructed and repopulated Morvedre on the eve of 1391.

CHAPTER ONE

COLONIZING THE VALENCIAN FRONTIER

The First Jewish Settlers

The Jewish community that emerged in thirteenth-century Morvedre was a product of Christian conquest and colonial enterprise. Although Jews had lived in other urban centers in the Muslim Sharq al-Andalus, Morvedre (Arabic Murbîtar) apparently had not housed a noteworthy Jewish population during the era of Muslim rule. Thus in the eyes of the Muslims who remained in the town after Christian forces captured it, the Jews would be, like the Christians, newcomers.

The Muslims of Morvedre, who had been under the authority of Zayyân, capitulated to the hosts of King Jaume I of Aragon-Catalonia around the time of the surrender of the city of Valencia on 28 September 1238.¹ The first evidence of Jewish settlement in post-conquest Morvedre, however, comes from almost a decade later, in the summer of 1248. Before this date even Christian settlement was sparse. Although Christians garrisoned the town's castle, and the king and Prince Pedro of Portugal, Morvedre's lord from 1244 to 1250, granted some lands and domiciles to Christians, the majority of the town's inhabitants continued to be Muslims.²

¹ The precise date of the surrender of Muslim Morvedre to King Jaume is unknown. See the comments of P. Guichard, *Les musulmans de Valence et la Reconquête (XI–XIII siècles)*, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1990–91), 1: 238. A. Chabret Fraga, *Sagunto: su historia y sus monumentos*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1888; reprint Sagunto, 1979), 1: 203–205, argued for a date shortly after the fall of Valencia city, a view implicitly shared by P. López Elum, *La conquista y repoblación valenciana durante el reinado de Jaime I* (Valencia, 1995), 60–61.

² Guichard, *Musulmans de Valence et la Reconquête*, 1: 238; and Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 210–216. See *Documentos de Jaime I de Aragón*, ed. A. Huici Miranda and M.D. Cabanes Pecourt, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1976), 2: no. 394 (18 August 1244), and 3: no. 655 (30 June 1254), regarding the beginning and end of Prince Pedro's lordship over Morvedre. It is possible that the prince granted land to one Jew, Salamó de Castellans, for an entry in the *Llibre del Repartiment*, dated 23 March 1250, has Abraham Abinafia being granted the lands of Salamó, which included one *jovada* in the hamlet of Figuerola. It is difficult to determine whether Salamó had died or moved or precisely when he had received these properties. For the grant to Abraham

The lag between conquest and substantial Christian and Jewish settlement in Morvedre was by no means exceptional. Outside of the Maestrazgo in the north of the new kingdom, and Valencia city and Borriana, Christian settlement was still, at the end of 1247, quite limited. The revolt of the Mudejar lord al-Azraq in 1247 precipitated a change in this state of affairs, moving an anxious and angry King Jaume to expel Muslims from a number of towns, including Morvedre. As in other places, an intensive effort at repopulation followed the removal of many Muslims from Morvedre and its environs.³

The evidence of Jewish settlement in Morvedre and of the subsequent growth of this Jewish community during the reigns of Jaume I (d. 1276) and his successor Pere II (d. 1285) is fragmentary. As in the kingdom's other urban centers in this period, the Jews made their presence felt in Morvedre in two ways: as settlers contributing to the stability and economic development of the town and its hinterland, and as royal officials using their administrative and linguistic skills in the government and fiscal exploitation of the town and its district, or *terme*. The monarchs valued both Jewish officials and Jewish settlers, although it is the former who appear most frequently in the documents. The two groups, however, were not necessarily mutually exclusive. Some Jewish officials established themselves permanently in Morvedre, while others did not. Yet, as will be discussed below, even the transitory presence of Jewish officials would

Abinafia of the *hereditatem* of Salamó, see *Llibre del Repartiment de València*, ed. A. Ferrando i Francés (Valencia, 1978), 179, no. 1989.

³ P. Guichard, "La conquista militar y la estructuración política del Reino," in P. Guichard et al., *Nuestra historia*, vol. 3 (Valencia, 1980), 27–31; *idem*, "La repoblación y la condición de los musulmanes," in *ibid.*, 48–49; López, *Conquista y repoblación*, 173–177, 220; Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, 152–154, 323–332; and *idem*, "The Crusade against Al-Azraq: A Thirteenth-Century Mudejar Revolt in International Perspective," *American Historical Review*, 93 (1988), 80–106. See Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 401–402, no. 3, regarding the indemnification of Prince Pedro for the loss of Muslim vassals ("expulsionem sarracenorum") in Morvedre and other places under his lordship. As Burns, "Crusade against Al-Azraq," 89, argues, the date of this document is probably February of 1249, not 1248. It is nonetheless clear that some Muslims remained in the town of Morvedre as well as on lands in its vicinity throughout the thirteenth century. See R.I. Burns, "Social Riots on the Christian-Moslem Frontier (Thirteenth-Century Valencia)," *American Historical Review*, 66 (1961), 388, who shows that King Pere fined Christians of Morvedre for their attack on local Muslims in 1276; and *idem*, *Islam under the Crusaders*, 225, 406–407, for discussion of a Mudejar marriage contract, dated 1297, showing that the bride's widowed mother possessed extensive properties in Morvedre and its environs.

have an impact on how Morvedre's Christians and Muslims perceived Jews.

The process of making Morvedre a secure, Christian town began in earnest in May 1248. Between May 1248 and September 1249 King Jaume granted houses in town and properties in the surrounding countryside to over one hundred Christians. Among the grantees were five Jews, also deemed loyal to the king and adjuncts to the king's plan to transform the town without ruining its economy. The first Jewish inhabitants of post-conquest Morvedre received, in addition to domiciles, properties similar in extent to those parceled out to Christians. It is by no means certain, however, that all the Jewish and Christian grantees actually put down roots in Morvedre, or that the *Llibre del Repartiment*, which lists the properties distributed by the king, provides a complete picture of the early Christian and Jewish settlement of the town.⁴

Of the five Jews, Salamó Vlayet was allocated the smallest amount of property: slightly more than one *jovada* of vineyard and two and one-half *fanecades* of irrigated land.⁵ Three of the Jews received more than the average of three *jovades* of land granted to individuals in

⁴ P. López Elum, "La repoblació valenciana," in *Història del País Valencià*, vol. 2: *De la conquesta a la federació hispànica* (Barcelona, 1989), 101–103; and Guichard, "La repoblación," 58–60, have useful comments on the value and limitations of the *Llibre del Repartiment*. Burns, "Crusade against Al-Azraq," 87, argues that the initial distribution of properties took place at Morvedre between May and December of 1247, not 1248. I see no convincing reason, however, to accept Burns's modification of the date, since all the evidence suggests otherwise, especially the *Llibre del Repartiment*, 290–300, nos. 3050–3151, which states explicitly that the grants were made in 1248. For the most recent discussion, see J. Torró, *El naixement d'una colònia. Dominació i resistència a la frontera valenciana (1238–1276)* (Valencia, 1999), 85–90. It is also worth noting that R. Ferrer Navarro, *Conquista y repoblación del reino de Valencia* (Valencia, 1999), 135–136, 224–225, while arguing on the basis of the extant evidence that the main repopulation of Morvedre occurred in 1248–49, conjectures that there was an earlier phase of repopulation immediately following the Christian conquest. This was certainly the case on some of the new lordships created in the *terme* of Morvedre (see, for instance, the *carta pobla* which the lord Assalit de Gudol granted to thirty nine Christians settling in his *alqueria* of Puçol in *Cartes de poblament medievals valencianes*, ed. E. Guinot Rodríguez [Valencia, 1991], no. 47). The state of affairs in the town proper, however, is far less clear.

⁵ *Llibre del Repartiment*, 216, no. 2385 (29 July 1249). The rather meager living to be earned from these lands probably only supplemented Salamó's income from other economic pursuits. In any case, neither Salamó nor any other member of the Vlayet family turn up in later documentation pertinent to Morvedre, but, given the fragmentary nature of the sources, which rarely give attention to Jews of lower status, this does not mean that he and his family did not settle there.

the *Repartiment*, property sufficient for the support of a family.⁶ Muza was granted three *jovades* of land in Figuerola, a hamlet located in the town's *terme*, and eight *fanecades* of vineyard.⁷ Jucef Albufach, probably an immigrant from Zaragoza in Aragon, and Isaac Avenros were each allocated three *jovades* in Gausa and one *jovada* in Labairén, both hamlets in Morvedre's district.⁸ Christian immigrants also received parcels in all three of these hamlets.⁹ The last of the Jewish grantees, Abraham Abinafia, came from Calatayud in Aragon and was the brother of Aaron Abinafia, an important royal functionary from the 1260s until 1283.¹⁰ The initial grant to Abraham of two and one-half *jovades* plus eight *fanecades* of vineyard does not suggest that he was well-connected, but he later benefited from his brother's success.¹¹ Because Aaron was more active in the royal service in Aragon than he was in the kingdom of Valencia,¹² Abraham may well have administered in his brother's stead his substantial Valencian holdings: the *alqueries* (hamlets) of Gàtova and Marines, both located near Morvedre, and the *alqueria* of Benavites in the town's *terme*.¹³

⁶ A. Furió and F. Garcia, "Dificultats agràries en la formació i consolidació del feudalisme al País Valencià," in *La formació i expansió del feudalisme català*, ed. J. Portella i Comas (*Estudi General: Revista del Col·legi Universitari del Girona*, 5–6) (Girona, 1985–86), 295–296, discuss the average size of land-grants and the difficulty in knowing precisely how much land would have been necessary for the subsistence of a family.

⁷ *Llibre del Repartiment*, 216, no. 2391 (2 August 1249).

⁸ *Llibre del Repartiment*, 300, no. 3147 for Jucef Albufach, and no. 3148 for Isaac Avenros, both dated 18 August 1248. The *Llibre* records the grant of houses and land in Valencia to one Alaçar Albufach, Jew of Zaragoza (31, no. 312). The houses Avenros appropriated in Morvedre had belonged to a Muslim butcher, probably recently expelled. The grant to Jucef, however, curiously did not include a house, though this might have been a scribal error. Subsequent documents do not record the presence of either Albufach or Avenros in Morvedre, but see n. 14 on Avenros in Valencia.

⁹ *Llibre del Repartiment*, 291, no. 3057, and 296–297, nos. 3107–3112, for the Christian grantees in Figuerola; 216, no. 2392, and 295–296, nos. 3094, 3111, 3119, 3120, for those in Labairén; and 216, no. 2388, for the one in Gausa.

¹⁰ On the origins of the Abinafias and the career of Aaron, see D. Romano, *Judíos al servicio de Pedro el Grande de Aragón (1276–1285)* (Barcelona, 1983), 57–86.

¹¹ *Llibre del Repartiment*, 292, no. 3071 (4 August 1248). The surname appears here as "Benofia." See also n. 2 regarding the concession of additional property to Abraham in 1250. In 1273 Abraham acted on behalf of his brother, then a royal bailiff, in matters related to Aaron's administration of the properties of Sancha Fernández, a ward of Prince Pere, the future Pere II (ACA: C 35: 27r).

¹² Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 59.

¹³ ACA: C 37: 93r (24 July 1275): Prince Pere places under royal protection Gàtova and Marines "que sunt Aharon Abinaffia" [transcribed in R.I. Burns, "The *Guidaticum* Safe-Conduct in Medieval Arago-Catalonia: A Mini-Institution for Muslims,

The promise of new land and opportunity attracted these five Jews to Morvedre, although for the most successful among them, Abraham Abinafia and Isaac Avenros, the lure of more cosmopolitan Valencia eventually proved irresistible.¹⁴ Morvedre would always be in the capital's orbit, its inhabitants of all three faiths drawn there for business or pleasure, and its Jews, until 1391, tied fiscally and otherwise to the capital's great *aljama*. Yet as the Christian population of Morvedre expanded and acquired its own institutions and local identity, so too did the town's Jewish population. As the Jewish community of Morvedre grew and carved out its own sphere in the regional economy, more affluent and ambitious Jews would find Morvedre a hub sufficiently vibrant for the pursuit of their aspirations.

After the initial allocation of property to Jews in Morvedre in 1248–49, the Jews of the town do not reappear in royal records until 1263, when King Jaume conceded them a remission of 200 sous from the 500 sous they normally paid the king *pro tributo* each year. The Jewish population had grown during the intervening years. The king addressed the letter “to each and every Jew of Morvedre,” suggesting a Jewish population larger than the five families of 1248–49. An annual payment of 500 sous, probably a lump sum for a body of royal taxes, would have been a heavy fiscal burden for only five families. The king, after all, wanted to lure Jewish settlers, not drive them away. The remission should be interpreted in this light, that is, as a measure intended to make Morvedre more attractive to present and future Jewish settlers. It was not tax relief to an economically prostrate community.¹⁵

Christians and Jews,” *Medieval Encounters*, 1 (1995), 101]. Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 198, notes that Aaron purchased these *alquerías* with his own money. ACA: C 44: 186v (1 March 1278) [Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 231, no. 11]: King Pere exempts from various royal taxes all Christian and Muslim tenants living in Aaron's *alquerías* of Benavites, Gátova, and Marines. It is not clear how Aaron came into possession of Benavites.

¹⁴ A document dated 28 April 1282 describes Isaac Avenros and his wife Mira as Jews of Valencia, where they were acknowledging their debt to the crown from Isaac's farming of the tax on wine the previous year (ACA: Pergaminos de Pedro III [Pere II], no. 351 [Régné, no. 913]). After King Pere's confirmation of a license to Abraham Abinafia to import Morvedre wine into Valencia (ACA: C 44: 180r [16 December 1279]), all further documentary references to Abraham, which extend from 8 April 1280 until 23 October 1289, describe him as a Jew of Valencia (Régné, nos. 773, 1010, 1222, 1637, 1725–26, 1790, 1818, 1841, 1857, 2021).

¹⁵ ACA: C 12: 106v (29 August 1263). R.I. Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Crusader kingdom of Valencia* (Cambridge, 1984), 298, no. 12, for transcription, and 161–162, for commentary.

The gradual increase in the Jewish population of Morvedre was an effect of royal privileges granted to both the inhabitants of the town and Jews throughout the kingdom. A royal concession of 29 July 1248 made the “customs,” or laws, of the city of Valencia applicable to “each and every inhabitant” of the town, and established a local court where civil and criminal cases were to be tried. (The Jews, of course, adjudicated cases involving only Jews in their own courts.) This privilege also guaranteed the farmers of Morvedre and its *terme* use of the water flowing in the Palancia River and in the irrigation canal of Torres-Torres, as had been the custom “in the time of the Saracens.” In 1249 and 1252 the king confirmed the settlers in the possession of their homes and allodial properties in the countryside.¹⁶ Such general privileges, which apparently have minimal relevance to the Jews, would in fact have fostered Jewish settlement. First of all, they placed Morvedre under royal supervision and protection, and sent clear signals that order was to be maintained in the town and justice administered to its inhabitants. The stability and protection thus promised would have encouraged potential Christian and Jewish settlers, and the resultant increase in Christian immigration would have provided Jews settling amidst the conquered Muslims with an additional measure of security.¹⁷

Secondly, since the *terme* of Morvedre was a rich and promising agricultural zone and since most, if not all, of the Jews who settled there devoted at least some of their labors to agriculture, the king’s confirmation of land grants and his commitment to the maintenance of an irrigation system responsible for the region’s evident fertility consolidated the economic foundations upon which the Jewish community could develop. Jews throughout the kingdom were investing in the real estate market that conquest had opened up, and in April 1261 King Jaume approved of all the purchases the Jews had made thus far as well as those they might make in the future.¹⁸ For Jews contemplating a move to fertile Morvedre, or for those already there, this was good news.

¹⁶ Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 217–219, and 2: 403–405, no. 4, for a transcription of King Jaume’s privilege of 1248.

¹⁷ For evidence of further Christian settlement in and around Morvedre between 1257 and 1263, see J.E. Martínez Ferrando, *Catálogo de los documentos del antiguo reino de Valencia*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1934), 1: nos. 73, 107, 134, 191, 201, 255, and 399.

¹⁸ ACA: C 11: 202v (13 April 1261) [Burns, *Diplomatarium*, 2: no. 366].

King Jaume's initial fiscal privileges to the kingdom's Jews encouraged them to put down roots without fear of being exhausted by excessive royal or municipal taxation. In 1261 he exempted the Jews from contributing to the 100,000-sous payment he was demanding from all the Muslims and Christians of the kingdom for his confirmation of the *Furs*.¹⁹ He also indicated his willingness to confer with Jewish envoys regarding the imposition of new levies,²⁰ and permitted Jews in the various localities to pay taxes as distinct communities and not in conjunction with local Christians.²¹ Jews possessing extensive rural properties benefited from the king's privilege of 1262, which released the Jews' Muslim tenants from paying the annual poll tax (*besant*).²² The aforementioned tax remission granted to the Jews of Morvedre the following year was consistent with this relative fiscal leniency, a policy intended to foster Jewish immigration.

Over the course of the next eight years the community continued to grow, achieving such size and stability that King Jaume addressed it for the first time, in September 1271, as an *aljama*, as a corporation. The king in fact deemed the *aljama* large enough to merit sending two delegates, along with the delegates from other Valencian and Aragonese *aljamas*, to confer with him about the amount of money he might request from them. Of the new kingdom's Jewish communities, only Valencia, Xàtiva, and Morvedre, the smallest of the three, were asked to send representatives.²³ In October King Jaume conceded to the *aljama* of Morvedre the same economic privileges he had recently issued to a number of the long-established Aragonese communities.²⁴

The king desired stable and economically vibrant Jewish communities in Morvedre and elsewhere in the kingdom not only to help

¹⁹ ACA: C 11: 233r (13 April 1261) [Burns, *Diplomatarium*, 2: no. 362].

²⁰ ACA: C 12: 43v–44r (9 May 1262) [Burns, *Diplomatarium*, 2: no. 391].

²¹ ACA: C 11: 202v.

²² ACA: C 12: 44v (10 May 1262) [Burns, *Diplomatarium*, 2: no. 393].

²³ ACA: C 18: 63v (1 September 1271). The *aljama* of Valencia was by far the largest and thus required four representatives. Although the Jews of Xàtiva sent the same number as their counterparts in Morvedre, their community at this juncture was wealthier and probably larger. See Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 162–166.

²⁴ ACA: C 16: 239v (25 October 1271) for the Morvedre privilege, and 252r (1 October 1271) for the privileges to the Aragonese *aljamas* of Monzón, Calatayud, Daroca, Teruel, Tarazona, Barbastro, and other places. The privileges involved permission to lend money at the rate of interest set by the crown and to conduct all other kinds of transactions with Christians.

secure the conquered territories but also to provide him eventually with a reliable source of revenue. The spotty fiscal records suggest that over the course of the 1270s the *aljama* of Morvedre was increasingly able to fulfill the latter purpose. If in 1263 King Jaume had decided to attract Jewish settlers to Morvedre by reducing the Jewish community's annual contribution from 500 to 300 sous "for as long as it shall please us," by 1272 he was demanding the full 500 sous from a community which he apparently thought had since grown. In fact, he required the Jews in 1272 to render not just the 500 sous but a full four-years' worth of taxes, or 2,000 sous, in advance, perhaps in order to gather funds for a crusade to the Holy Land. Jaume, however, discovered that his estimation of the *aljama*'s capabilities was overly optimistic: he collected only 600 sous from the *aljama* and remitted the rest.²⁵ Royal confidence in the *aljama*'s growth and prosperity further manifested itself the following year when the king compensated Sancho Pérez de Ribavaiillosa for the four *jovades* of land he had perforce relinquished near Almenara with an annual lifetime pension of 200 sous which would be collected from the *aljama*'s annual "tribute."²⁶ In 1274 the size of this annual tribute, or the lump sum of taxes paid by the Jews, doubled from 500 to 1,000 sous.²⁷ This does not mean, however, that the population of

²⁵ ACA: C 18: 47v (1 March 1272). Here I am partly following the suggestions of Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 162. Burns, however, seems to ignore that the king collected only 600 sous and "residuum remisit." Although the rubric at the head of the document names the taxes collected as "has peytas," Burns's suggestion that Jaume was amassing funds for a contemplated Holy Land crusade makes sense, considering the king's obsession with such an enterprise between 1266 and 1275. See J. Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de la bula de la cruzada en España* (Vitoria, 1958), 208–215, 221–227. Y. Assis, *Jewish Economy in the Medieval Crown of Aragon, 1213–1327: Money and Power* (Leiden, 1997), 122, points out that in 1269 Jaume borrowed 10,000 sous from the *aljama* of Valencia for his projected crusade.

²⁶ ACA: C 21: 150v (29 May 1273): "In emendam et satisfactionem reddituum illorum quatuor jovatarum terre quas vos Sancius Petri de Ribavaiillosa tenebatis in termino castri Almenare et quas nos dedimus Marie Eximini, damus et assignamus vobis ducentos solidos regaliū annuales in vita vestra habendos et recipiendos in tributo judeorum nostrorum Muriveteris . . . Mandantes firmiter baiulo et aljame judeorum Muriveteris tam presentibus quam futuris quod de dicto tributo donent et solvant vobis singulis annis in tota vita vestra CC solidos predictos."

²⁷ ACA: C 23: 8v (23 July 1274); and see Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 318 n. 19. To this sum one should probably add the 150 sous paid by the Jews of Morvedre to subsidize King Jaume's trip to the second council of Lyon in the spring of 1274—ACA: C 18: 64r–v. This document is undated, but, *contra* Régéné, no. 483, and Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 161, Jaume attended the council in 1274, not 1271. See Goñi, *Historia*, 222.

Morvedre's Jewish community had increased twofold. More likely it is a reflection of the monarch's intention to seek more revenue from this and other Valencian Jewish communities once they had attained a reasonable size and a firm economic footing. By the mid-1270s the Jewish *aljama* of Morvedre had arrived. Along with the Valencia and Xàtiva Jewish communities, it was one of the "big three" in the kingdom, and would remain so, as later summonses of communal representatives to the royal court indicate.²⁸

Even though the extant evidence does not allow one to trace with any precision the further immigration of Jews to Morvedre during the 1260s and 1270s, the presence there of Jewish bailiffs and Jewish landlords almost certainly created a more propitious environment for it. For most potential Jewish immigrants, with the exception of members of the most influential families, the mere appearance of the new kingdom as a land of opportunity was not necessarily enough to lure them from their abodes, however humble, in Aragon and Catalonia. Concerns about security figured into the calculations of Jews contemplating a move to a kingdom where the conquered Muslims were still rebellious and the Christian settlers grasping and aggressive. Morvedre, with its strong fortress and proximity to Valencia, the center of royal government, offered Jewish settlers greater security than most Valencian towns. This was especially the case when the royal bailiff who controlled the castle, and who had the ear and the support of the royal authorities, was himself a Jew.

The kings had come to view Jews from certain leading families as particularly useful servants, because of their financial acumen, knowledge of Arabic, reliability, and the Jews' general dependence on the crown. Several of these prominent Jews had a hand in the economic and political affairs of Morvedre in the twenty years after 1262. In 1263 and again in 1271, King Jaume empowered Astruc Jacob Xixó, his creditor and bailiff in Tortosa in Catalonia, to collect royal revenues in Morvedre and other northern Valencian towns.²⁹

²⁸ ACA: C 40: 111v (3 June 1278): King Pere commands the *aljamas* of Valencia, Xàtiva, and Morvedre, and various Catalan and Aragonese *aljamas* to send delegates to show him all royal privileges previously granted to the *aljamas* or individual Jews; and ACA: C 46: 216r (27 June 1284): along with various Aragonese and Catalan *aljamas*, the same three Valencian *aljamas* are required to send delegates to confer with the king regarding tax fraud.

²⁹ The other towns where Astruc collected crown revenues were, in 1263, Peníscola, Borriana, and Onda, and, in 1271, Onda, Sogorb, and Uixó. There is no evidence,

Between the fall of 1273 and 1282 all the royal bailiffs of Morvedre were Jews.³⁰ Serving from August 1273 until early 1275, the first appointee was Salamó de la Cavalleria, member of a powerful family from Zaragoza, Aragon, whose father Jahudà was the bailiff of Zaragoza, the royal treasurer of Aragon, and the bailiff of Valencia city sometime before 1275.³¹ Salamó was succeeded in 1275 and 1276 by Muça de Portella, a native of Tarazona, Aragon, who was subsequently much involved in the administration of this realm.³²

Unlike their predecessors, the last two bailiffs of Morvedre, Jucef Avinçaprut (1277, 1279–81) and Salamó Alconstantini (1278), remained in the town after their terms in office. The bitter rivals of the Cavallerias in Zaragoza, the Alconstantinis were, like them, a major office-holding family. Salamó's father Bahiel had been the Arabic secretary (*hakîm*) of King Jaume, and his older brother Mossé was the bailiff of Zaragoza between 1276 and 1278 and then of Valencia in 1281 and 1282. Such connections facilitated Salamó's purchase of the bailiages of Morvedre and Montesa from Jucef Ravaya, the

however, that Astruc ever had more than a passing interest in Morvedre. The relevant documents are transcribed in F. de A. de Bofarull y Sans, "Jaime I y los judíos," *Congrés d'història de la Corona d'Aragó*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1908), 2: 872–873, no. 31 (ACA: C 14: 2r [15 June 1263]), and 908, no. 100 (ACA: C 16: 257r [1 December 1270]). See also Baer, *History*, 1: 146, 407 n. 21; R.I. Burns, *Medieval Colonialism: Postcrusade Exploitation of Islamic Valencia* (Princeton, 1975), 285–286; and *idem*, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 154–155.

³⁰ Excepting the activities of Astruc Jacob Xixó in 1263 and 1271, before fall 1273 all those who acted as bailiffs of Morvedre, or who administered the crown's fiscal revenues there, were Christians: Arnau de Font (1259–60), Bernat Escrivà (1261–67?); and Robaldo de Voltorash (1268–70, 1272–73). See Martínez Ferrando, *Catálogo*, 1: nos. 286, 365, 783, 785, 796, 940, 965, 1489.

³¹ Salamó was also bailiff of Sogorb, Onda, Uixó, and Almonesir, but, at the king's request, he made the castle of Morvedre his headquarters. The relevant documents are ACA: C 19: 66v (31 August 1273) [*Colección diplomática de Jaime I, el Conquistador*, ed. A. Huici Miranda, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1916–22), no. 1408], the appointment of Salamó; C 20: 238r (19 March 1275), in which Salamó has settled accounts with the king in Lleida "super redditibus et exitibus ac iuribus nostris omnibus quas tu recepisti pro nobis de baiulia Muriveteris et de Onda, ville Sogorbii, de castro Uxonis dum ipsam baiuliam Muriveteris et aliorum locorum predictorum pro nobis tenuisti"; and C 23: 19v ([March?] 1274 or 1275) [Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 300, no. 19], dealing with Salamó's accounts at an earlier date. See also Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 274–275; and *idem*, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 139–144.

³² Muça was also bailiff of Sogorb, Onda, Vila-real, Morella, and Peníscola. ACA: C 38: 13r (17 August 1276) [Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 225, no. 1] establishes that guarding Morvedre's castle was one of his responsibilities. ACA: C 20: 319r (5 February 1276) shows that Muça was in Morvedre collecting debts owed to Bernat de Capellades: "universibus hominibus Muriveteris . . . mandamus vobis firmiter

bailiff of the kingdom.³³ His predecessor and successor as bailiff of Morvedre, Jucef Avinçaprut, was the scion of one of Islamic Valencia's Jewish families who had abandoned the city soon after its fall to Christian forces.³⁴ Jucef eventually made himself useful to the new rulers in areas outside the capital. By 1272 he was well established in Morvedre and something of a royal favorite, receiving from King Jaume an annual stipend of 120 sous and a lifetime exemption from royal taxes.³⁵ Before purchasing the bailiarge of Morvedre at the end of 1276,³⁶ Jucef was also granted in perpetuity the lucrative monopoly of the town's royal baths as well as property in its *terme*.³⁷ Jucef must have acquitted himself well in 1277, for after the tenure of

quatenus, visis presentibus, Muçe de Portella, baiulo nostro, solvatis, loco nostri, debita et comandas que dicto Bernardo de Capellatis debetis." ACA: 38: 38r (17 September 1276) concerns Muça's settling of accounts for the revenues he collected while bailiff. Since Salamó de la Cavalleria's term of office as bailiff of Morvedre ended at the beginning of 1275 (see above at n. 31) and there are no other documentary references to anyone else administering the bailiarge of Morvedre for the rest of 1275, it is likely that Muça was bailiff in 1275 as well. Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 17–55, 180–191, for Muça's activities in the kingdom of Aragon.

³³ ACA: C 40: 49v (27 December 1277): "Cum fidelis baiulus noster Juceffus Ravaya vendiderit ad unum annum primo venturum Salamoni, fratri Mosse alfaquimi nostri, redditus, exitus et proventus baiulie nostre Muriveteris . . ."; and C 41: 70v (8 May 1279): "Procuratori Regni Valencie, quod compellat illos qui fuerunt participes Salamonis Bahiel [Alconstantini] anno preterito in emptionibus baiuliarum Muriveteris et Munties ad computandum cum eodem de ipsis baiuliis ad persolvendum eidem partem eos contingentem solvere in precio dicte emptionis prout fuerit faciendum," which shows that Salamó had partners in his purchase of the bailiarge. He, however, was alone in executing the duties of bailiff, on which see below in this chapter and chap. 2. Baer, *History*, 1: 215, notes that Salamó was unsuccessfully nominated as chief judge of all the Jews of Aragon in 1294. The Alconstantini family ultimately returned to Zaragoza in 1307—see chap. 3, and ACA: C 218: 131r (21 October 1320), which finds Bahiel, the son of Salamó and grandson of Bahiel, established with his family in Zaragoza.

³⁴ The *Llibre del Repartiment*, 81, no. 962, records the granting of the domiciles of one "Jucef Abinsaprud," located in the city of Valencia, to "Ibrahym," a Jew from Toledo, on 31 December 1239. This Jucef was probably the grandfather or uncle of Jucef Avinçaprut, the future bailiff of Morvedre.

³⁵ ACA: C 14: 145v (29 January 1272).

³⁶ ACA: C 39: 156r (3 February 1277): "laudamus, concedimus et confirmamus vobis Jucefo Abençaprut, judeo habitatori Muriveteris, venditionem vobis factam per fidelem baiulum nostrum Jucefum Ravaya de redditibus, exitibus et aliis iuribus baiulie nostre Muriveteris, cum publico instrumento prout in eo plenius continetur." For Jucef's activities as bailiff, see below in this chapter and chap. 2.

³⁷ ACA: C 19: 19r (16 June 1273) for the bath concession. The 200-sous annual rent Jucef was obliged to pay the crown indicates that it was a fairly lucrative monopoly. C 19: 49r-v (4 November 1273) is a royal grant of three *jovades* of land divided into five pieces and described as Jucef's "hereditatem propriam." C 19: 64v (23 October 1273) is a grant to Jucef of two of the same three *jovades*.

Alconstantini in 1278, King Pere named him bailiff for the next three years.³⁸ Jewish authority in Morvedre reached its peak during the bailiages of Alconstantini and Avinçaprut.

The Jewish bailiffs of Morvedre need not always have acted in the interests of the local Jewish community for their considerable authority to have impressed Jewish settlers and instilled in them some measure of confidence. King Jaume's letter of 1273 appointing Salamó de la Cavallería as bailiff of Morvedre and other places hints at the kind of power royal bailiffs exercised: "firmly commanding each and every man of the said places, namely Christians and Saracens, to answer to you in our place . . . for all our revenue, income, and taxes."³⁹ The bailiffs, Jewish or Christian, intervened not only in fiscal affairs but in almost any matter involving the interests of the crown, such as overseeing public works or dispossessing recalcitrant vassals of their property.⁴⁰ Of particular significance for immigrants to Morvedre, of whatever faith, was the role of the bailiffs in leasing them the domiciles, workshops, yards, gardens, and other properties owned by the crown.⁴¹ Jewish bailiffs would not necessarily have favored Jews when renting out crown properties, but as administrators and organizers of a new royal town with contacts in other Jewish communities, they would have been particularly effective at fostering Jewish settlement. Christian and Jewish immigration was, after all, a royal objective, and the Jewish bailiffs were royal functionaries.

Jewish bailiffs facilitated the Jewish settlers' access to Morvedre's real estate market. The dispossession of many Muslim proprietors in 1248 and the gradual repopulation of the town created a land market

³⁸ It is probable, but not certain, that Jucef was bailiff in 1279—see Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 144. ACA: C 42: 203r (9 January 1280) [Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 237–238, no. 21] for the appointment of Jucef "dum nobis [the king] placuerit." Jucef also administered the bailiage of Sogorb sometime prior to April 1282 (ACA: C 46: 79v, and Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 147).

³⁹ ACA: C 19: 66v (31 August 1273) [*Colección diplomática*, ed. Huici, no. 1408]. Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 275, translates this text.

⁴⁰ See below in this chapter and chap. 2 for more detailed discussions of the bailiffs' activities.

⁴¹ ACA: C 20: 319r (5 February 1276): "Damus licenciam et plenum posse vobis Muçe de Portella, baiulo nostro Muriveteris, Segorbi, Onde, Ville Regalis, Morelle, et Peniscole, quod possitis dare et stabilire omnes hereditates et loca que dandum sunt seu stabiliendum in locis predictis." ACA: C 40: 99v (26 April 1278) [Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 231, no. 12] is a similar license to Salamó Alconstantini; and C 48: 165v (15 October 1280) [Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 241, no. 28] licenses Jucef Avinçaprut to lease workshops in the main plaza of Morvedre.

which still, in the years after 1263, offered many possibilities. For Salamó Alconstantini and Jucef Avinçaprut proprietary interests overlapped with official functions. The former had inherited from his father an estate of unspecified size in the hamlets of Gausa and Conillera in the municipal district.⁴² His inheritance was in any case smaller than that of his brother Mossé, which included the *alqueria* of Albasset near Morvedre and vineyards in Conillera.⁴³ Avinçaprut apparently became the proprietor of the hamlet of Canet d'En Berenguer in 1277, after King Pere commanded him to confiscate it from its Christian landlords.⁴⁴ The extensive properties of the Abinafia family were also in the environs of Morvedre. These office-holding families promoted their coreligionists' colonization of Morvedre and its countryside, either directly, by renting pieces of their own land to Jewish tenants, or indirectly, by establishing a pattern of Jewish proprietorship in the region which would have encouraged other Jews to follow suit. Hence in June 1279, after five consecutive years of Jewish tenure of the bailiate, the bishop of Valencia, Jazpert de Botonach, realized that there was a sufficient number of Jews cultivating lands around Morvedre to make it worth his while to try collecting ecclesiastical tithes and first-fruits from them. King Pere pointed out, however, that these lands had never belonged to Christians but had previously been owned by Muslims, and that therefore the

⁴² ACA: C 13: 170v (10 May 1264) [Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 299, no. 14].

⁴³ ACA: C 13: 167r (29 March 1264) [Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 298–299, no. 13] for Mossé's portion. In 1271, however, the crown confiscated half of his property as a penalty for his having forged royal letters to support his family's claims in a dispute with Jahudà de la Cavalleria over judicial authority in the *aljama* of Zaragoza. The assertion of Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 88, that Salamó was also thus penalized is incorrect. ACA: C 16: 261v–262r (24 April 1271) [Bofarull, "Jaime I y los judíos," no. 103; Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 104] shows that the king condemned only Mossé, even though Salamó had joined his brother in leveling accusations against Cavalleria. After his term of office as bailiff of Valencia, Mossé was convicted, perhaps for malfeasance, and had the rest of his property confiscated, in lieu of suffering the death penalty. At least some of his property around Morvedre—"bona . . . cum iure et dominio eorundem in termino Muriveteris"—was auctioned off to one Lappo Giandoni (ACA: C 46: 122r [21 November 1283]). See also Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 87–112; and Baer, *History*, 1: 172, 223–224, for Mossé's career.

⁴⁴ ACA: C 22: 76r (4 November 1277) contains two letters. The first is the order of confiscation, and the second is the king's promise to transfer the *alqueria* into Jucef's possession: "Promittimus tibi Jucefo Auinceprut quod cum obtinuerimus alqueriam de Caynete, quam de jure ad nos spectare credimus, heredabitur te competenter in eadem alcheria."

produce from them was not liable to tithing.⁴⁵ The municipal government of Morvedre was a bit slower in attempting to reap additional profits from the increasing Jewish agricultural activity in the *terme*, but in 1284 the justice and *jurats* tried to force Jewish landowners to contribute more than their Christian counterparts toward the maintenance of the Torres-Torres irrigation canal.⁴⁶

There are a few shreds of evidence as to the origins of some of the Jews who settled in Morvedre in the 1270s and subsequent decades. Toponyms suggest that some settlers were natives of Zaragoza and Tarazona in Aragon—not coincidentally the hometowns of three of Morvedre's Jewish bailiffs—and of Girona in Catalonia.⁴⁷ Other evidence indicates that immigrants came from Teruel in Aragon, such as Mossé Abenrodrich.⁴⁸

Problems in their birthplaces, or in their second homes in the kingdom of Valencia, pushed some Jews to pack their bags and start afresh in Morvedre. Samuel Passarell, a resident of Morvedre by 1282, had received a royal pardon in 1267 for the judicial procedures

⁴⁵ ACA: C 41: 98r (27 June 1279): "Ex parte aljame judeorum Muriveteris intelleximus quod bajulus venerabilis episcopi Valencie exigit ab eis et eos compellit ad prestandum decimam et primiciam de hereditatis [sic] suis que nunquam fuerunt christianorum et de quorum fructibus nunquam consueverunt dare decimam neque primiciam supradictas, et quod jus non vult ab ipsis recipere de predictis. Vnde mandamus vobis quatenus non permitatis dictos judeos super hoc extra justiciam agravari nec indebite molestari per bajulum antedictum." For more on the general problem of ecclesiastical tithing, see R.I. Burns, *The Crusader Kingdom of Valencia: Reconstruction on a Thirteenth-Century Frontier*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 1: 142–172.

⁴⁶ ACA: C 46: 208r (13 June 1284): "Ex parte judeorum Muriveteris coram nobis proponitum extitit conquerendo quod vos compellitis et compelli facitis eos ratione expensarum factarum pro coequia de Torres Torres ad solvendum pro hereditatibus eorum plusquam cristiani dicti loci pro eorundem hereditatibus sunt tatxati." The king demanded that they revert to the previous, more equitable arrangement, in which contributions to the canal's upkeep were assessed *per jovada* of land owned, regardless of the proprietor's religious affiliation.

⁴⁷ ACA: C 42: 227r (23 February 1280) is the first reference to Bonet Çaragoçano, collector of the *herbatge* tax. ACA: C 59: 131r (18 October 1282) concerns Azmel de Tirasona [Tarazona], the creditor of a Christian butcher named Martí; and ACA: C 63: 39v (3 February 1286) treats the inheritance bequeathed by Astruc de Gerunda [Girona] to his young daughter Astruga and nephew Astruguet.

⁴⁸ Mossé first appears as a Jew of Morvedre in an order of Prince Pere, dated 3 January 1295, placing him under royal protection: "recipimus et constituimus te Mosse Abenrodrich, judeum Muriveteris, sub protectione et comanda dicti domini Regis et nostra ac custodia speciali cum omnibus rebus et bonis tuis habitis et habendis" (ACA: C 89: 55v). ACA: C 56: 128r (1 June 1285) for Mossé in Teruel. He was probably the son of Açac (Isaac) Avenrodrich.

initiated against him by the Justice of Aragon.⁴⁹ Salamó, the son of Bonjudà de Torre, had been somehow involved in an assault on Salamó Vidal, a Jew of Borriana and servant of Prince Pere. Even though Pere waived all possible claims he might make against Salamó, in exchange for a monetary payment, fear of Vidal's revenge probably prompted his move to Morvedre.⁵⁰ Nasty fiscal politics in the *aljama* of Valencia caused Bonjudà Saladi to abandon the capital for Morvedre in the 1290s. Saladi, who had served as *aljama* secretary in 1294, was accused of maladministering tax revenues.⁵¹

Morvedre, however, did not become a dumping ground for the Crown of Aragon's Jewish riff-raff and fiscal refugees. Individuals accused of assault and malfeasance or petitioning for tax relief turn up in the records more frequently precisely because they attracted official attention. The silent majority of enterprising Jewish and Christian immigrants viewed Morvedre more as a place of opportunity than as a refuge.

The Foundations of a New Order

The Jewish and Christian immigrants who put down roots in Morvedre during the four or five decades following the conquest laid the foundations of a new order. Their experience of the process, in all its political, social, and economic dimensions, was markedly different

⁴⁹ ACA: C 59: 131r (18 October 1282) for Samuel in Morvedre; and ACA: C 15: 58r: 362r (28 June 1267) for Samuel in Aragon.

⁵⁰ Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 159, treats the assault and its aftermath. Salamó de Torre was still liable to respond in court to any charges Vidal might bring. Vidal's power and influence only increased; in late 1276 King Pere appointed him bailiff of Vila-real. ACA: C 59: 131r (18 October 1282), for "Salamoni de Torre [or Turre]" as a Jew of Morvedre, and like Samuel Passarell and Azmel de Tirasona, a creditor of Martí the butcher.

⁵¹ ACA: C 74: 66r (22 January 1288) concerns the complaint of the Saladi brothers, Bonjudà and Jucef, that they had been unjustly taxed by communal officials. ACA: CR Alfonso II, Ex.S., no. 131 (1299), is an account of the expenses made by the *aljama* of Valencia, which shows, at entries LIII and CV, that Bonjudà was living in Morvedre. This text is transcribed in *The Jews in the Crown of Aragon Regesta of the "Cartas Reales" in the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón. Part I: 1066-1327*, ed. M. Cinta Mañé and G. Escribà (Jerusalem, 1993), 15-25, no. 35. ACA: C 202: 203r (31 December 1304) treats the settlement Bonjudà and other Jews were compelled to make with the crown, in return for a pardon. Bonjudà Saladi's widow Astruga and daughter Regina were still living in Morvedre in 1352—see Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 430, no. 10.

from that of the subjugated Muslim population. For the Jews and Christians the laws and privileges King Jaume bestowed on his new realm created the legal and institutional framework within which they could make the best of the possibilities conquest offered. They had lost nothing in the conquest and had everything to gain from it. Even the Jewish *dhimmî* families of Islamic Valencia who had stayed on, like the Avinçapruts, had merely changed one non-Jewish overlord for another. The Muslims, in contrast, bitterly acknowledged that the rights and privileges they possessed in the new kingdom were little more than terms of surrender, and they felt each additional restriction or loss of property as a further indignity and outrage. The many, ultimately unsuccessful, rebellions that rocked the kingdom throughout the reign of King Jaume and at the outset of his successor's reign attest to the Mudejars' discontent and anger.

The Jewish and Christian settlers shared many of the same concerns and, in certain respects, needed each other. Living amidst a barely subdued Muslim population, the problem of security loomed largely. There was safety in numbers; hence the more non-Muslims the better. The Jews certainly needed the Christians more for their own protection, and a substantial Christian presence was requisite for the sustained growth of Morvedre's Jewish community. But the Christian settlers were themselves in no position to protest the coming of Jews to their town, and indeed they did not do so. Jewish bodies, Jewish labor, Jewish capital, and, if need be, Jewish swords were all welcome in this colonial town. Any Arabic-speaking Jews would have been especially useful for dealing with the local Muslims. More than anything else the Christian colonists feared Mudejar revolt, and during the tumultuous months of 1276–77, when the threat to their physical security seemed very real, they vented their anxiety in an attack on Morvedre's Muslim quarter. Not surprisingly, they did not harm the Jews, who stood to lose as much as they should the Mudejars overthrow the new regime. In circumstances of overt and dangerous conflict between Muslims and Christians, the latter regarded the Jews more as allies than as enemies.

The Christians' sense, in the mid-1270s, that the local Jews were their allies derived partly from their recognition that they all were subjects of the same king, a consideration of some weight in a colonial town taking shape under the aegis of the crown. Furthermore, between 1273 and 1282 the king's main representative, the local embodiment of royal authority, was the bailiff, the Jewish bailiff. The

bailiff's real power and all that it symbolized made it more difficult for Christians to equate Jewish and Muslim "infidels" or to act rashly and violently on the messages they received from churchmen about traitorous and abject Jews. Even if the Jewish bailiff became a focus for Christian resentment, he nonetheless served and represented the king whom most Christian subjects instinctively feared and obeyed.

The activities of the Jewish bailiffs, by far the best documented of all Morvedre's Jewish inhabitants in this early period, reflect the quite distinct relations which Jews had with Christians and Muslims in colonial Morvedre. Though very few Jews served as bailiffs, the bailiffs' public undertakings were representative of a general realignment of social and economic power entailing much Jewish-Christian collaboration at the expense of local Muslims.

As custodians of the local castle in frequent communication with the royal court, the Jewish bailiffs were in a position to assist in protecting the Christian populace from the masses of unruly Muslims. In the event Christian settlers, and their Jewish counterparts, were not forced by Muslim rebels to retreat behind the walls of the fortress, but in perilous times all would have deemed this a distinct possibility and thus have looked to the bailiff.

The necessities of economic life, however, ultimately brought Jews and Christians together far more frequently than mobilization for communal defense. The livelihood of many Christian settlers in Morvedre hinged on some degree of cooperation with the bailiff, since it was the bailiff's responsibility to distribute and lease royal properties and to confirm the settlers' proprietary rights. Some Christians therefore ingratiated themselves with him. The bailiff Salamó Alconstantini rewarded the efforts of Bonafonat de Vallebrera by granting his son, Lup, a license to build a mill, even though the grant potentially violated the rights of another mill-owner.⁵²

More generally, the bailiff was the guardian of the town's economic interests. With aggressive seigneurs establishing themselves in the town's hinterland and always ready to grab more pastureland or

⁵² ACA: C 40: 87r-v (6 April 1278). The other mill-owner, Bernat de Pont, objected because the new mill was to be built below his own mills ("in parte inferiori molendinorum ipsius Bernardi de Ponte"). King Pere commanded Salamó to put a stop to all construction until the local justice investigated the matter. This license may have initiated the long and mutually beneficial relationship between the knightly Vallebrera family and elite Jewish families in Morvedre, on which see chap. 5.

to deviate more irrigation water toward their estates, it was essential that the town's boundaries, and claims to needed resources, be clearly defined. The bailiff Jucef Avinçaprut and the town council collaborated in this important and delicate task.⁵³ Or, when the municipality took the offensive against outsiders, the bailiff was bound to be implicated. Avinçaprut and other local officials arbitrarily demanded a payment in kind from the fishermen of Oropesa and other coastal towns to the north who had to travel through Morvedre in order to market their catch in the capital.⁵⁴

That Jewish bailiffs set boundaries and the like to further the interests of the town did not make a great deal of difference to local Muslims, since they saw the town being slowly but surely wrested from them by the growing body of Romance-speaking immigrants whose settlement the bailiffs fostered. More to the point, the very linguistic skills and cultural sensibilities that potentially brought the polyglot Jewish bailiffs closer to the Muslims also rendered the bailiffs particularly useful to the Christian authorities in ruling over them. The positions of authority that Jews were thus able to occupy distanced them from the Muslims. When the Jewish bailiff or tax collector was a former Valencian *dhimmî* and therefore all the more familiar with the ways of the region's Muslims, the latter did not view him as more of a comrade or his official actions with greater equanimity. On the contrary, even though he was probably a more efficient administrator for the crown, the Muslims regarded him as an upstart taking advantage of a world—their world—turned upside down. The Muslims of Xàtiva had thus specifically requested in their surrender treaty with King Jaume that Jews not be appointed as bailiffs or as tax collectors over them.⁵⁵ Morvedre's Muslims would not have welcomed Jewish officials any more than their fellows in Xàtiva.

⁵³ ACA: C 48: 166r (15 October 1280) [Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 241, no. 29]. The king instructed the municipal council to give Avinçaprut "counsel and assistance."

⁵⁴ ACA: C 42: 232v (22 March 1280): "accipiunt per violenciam quantum volunt de piscibus quos pescatores Orpesie et aliorum locorum Ripparie ab Orpesie citra adducunt ad vendendum in Valenciam."

⁵⁵ Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 291; yet, as Burns points out, this did not stop the king from making a Jew, Judah b. Manasseh, bailiff of Xàtiva in 1272. In the Capitulations agreed between the Muslims of Granada and Fernando and Isabel in 1491, the Muslims specifically asked the Catholic Monarchs not to permit Jews to exercise authority over them or to collect taxes from them—see L.P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago, 1990), 317.

King Jaume and King Pere ignored the expressed or unexpressed wishes of the Muslims—in Morvedre, for eight consecutive years. Even if it were not their intention, the monarchs' timing could not have been better for driving home the point to the Muslims that a new order had emerged and, after the suppression of the final Muslim rebellion in 1277, was here to stay. In fact, during the Mudejar rebellions of 1275–77, when Muslims in places near Morvedre, like Torres-Torres and Almonesir, rose up, the bailiff Muça de Portella had a role in the punishment of captive Muslim rebels. When he settled accounts with the crown for his administration of the bailiwates of Morvedre and other regional towns in 1276, among his receipts was the money “from the sale of certain Saracens of Morvedre and Onda whom you [Muça] sold.”⁵⁶

On the other hand, because it was the bailiff's job to oversee the king's interests, which included protecting his Muslim vassals resident in royal towns, it is possible that Muça de Portella attempted to thwart the Christian attack on the *moreria*, and that in 1279 Jucef Avinçaprut penalized those Christians implicated in the violence.⁵⁷ Even so, it must have been a bitter irony for the Muslims of Morvedre that the local bailiff in 1277, and again between 1279 and 1281, was none other than Avinçaprut, the former Valencian *dhimmî*.

⁵⁶ ACA: C 38: 38r (17 September 1276): “Recognoscimus vobis Muze de Portella, baiulo nostro, quod computastis nobiscum . . . de denariis quos recipistis de venditione quorundam sarracenorum Muriveteris et Onde quos vendidistis.” See also ACA: C 38: 56r (13 October 1276), and C 40: 99r (3 May 1278), which note the prior sale of sixteen Muslims by the Jew Salamó Aborrabe, acting on behalf of Muça de Portella. It is possible that the Muslims thus sold had been the victims of the Christian mobs which, in the course of their attacks on the Mudejar inhabitants of Morvedre and other towns, enslaved Muslims. But since the bailiff himself sold them, instead of merely collecting the royal fifth from other parties who had sold slaves, the Muslims in question here were almost certainly rebels. On the revolts and the anti-Mudejar violence, see Guichard, “Conquista militar,” 33–38; Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, 40–45; and *idem*, “Social Riots.” See *Cartes de poblament*, ed. Guinot, nos. 176–178, for the capitulations of the rebel Muslims of Torres-Torres, Serra d’Eslida, and Castro and Alфонdegulla, respectively. That of Serra refers specifically to “los moros de Serra qui foren presos en Morvedre per raó de peynnora.” M.D. Meyerson, “Slavery and the Social Order: Mudejars and Christians in the Kingdom of Valencia,” *Medieval Encounters*, 1 (1995), 144–173, treats the problem of Mudejar slavery.

⁵⁷ Burns, “Social Riots,” 388, n. 29, regarding the punishment and seizure of the goods of those guilty of attacking the Muslims of Morvedre; and ACA: C 41: 111r (17 June 1279), a letter to the bailiff and justice of Morvedre concerning the fines to be collected from “homines Muriveteris ratione barrigii sarracenorum eiusdem loci.” There is some uncertainty, however, as to precisely when in 1279 Avinçaprut began to function as bailiff (Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 144).

Jewish bailiffs more typically intruded into the lives of the Muslims of Morvedre and environs when collecting the various taxes, customs duties, and utility fees that were part and parcel of the conquerors' regime.⁵⁸ The bailiffs also compelled Muslim tenants to pay rent to their Christian landlords,⁵⁹ confiscated the goods of delinquent Muslim taxpayers,⁶⁰ and, most strikingly in terms of the differential status of Jews and Muslims, drafted Muslims in Morvedre's *terme* to perform manual labor for the repair and maintenance of the town's walls and royal utilities.⁶¹ When Jews like Salamó de la Cavallería and Muça de Portella held multiple bailiages—Morvedre as well as the largely Muslim places of Sogorb, Onda, Uixó, and Almonesir—Muslims of a much wider region grew accustomed to

⁵⁸ Muslims were almost certainly affected when King Pere ordered Jucef Avinçaprut to collect the *peatge*, or transit duty, on all wheat and wine transported through Morvedre, and to prohibit the inhabitants of *alqueries* in the *terme* from constructing ovens without royal permission—"[c]um multi . . . sine concessione nostra in perjudicium nostrum fecerunt furnos in aliquibus alqueriis que sunt in termino Muriveteris, mandamus vobis quatenus prohibeatis" (ACA: C 49: 64r [1 April 1281] for both orders). Ovens were crown utilities for which user-fees could be charged. For the whole range of taxes in thirteenth-century Valencia, see Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*.

⁵⁹ The king's order to Salamó Alconstantini on 2 April 1278 that he *not* force the Muslims to pay rent because they had not been able to cultivate their lands during the tumults of 1276–77 suggests that normally it was his job to do just the opposite. ACA: C 40: 83r: "Mandamus vobis [bailiff of Morvedre] quatenus non compellatis nec compelli permitatis aliquos sarracenos Muriveteris aut termini eiusdem ad solvendum loguerium pro hereditatibus quas tenent ab aliquibus christianis pro tempore videlicet quo fuerunt absentes ratione dicte gerre cum infra dictum tempus non potuerunt aliquod expletum de hereditatibus memoratis."

⁶⁰ After Salamó Alconstantini confiscated the property of a Muslim couple, most likely for fiscal reasons, the couple turned to the court of the local justice. The bailiff was ordered to relinquish the property while the justice dealt with the case. ACA: C 40: 163r (23 September 1278): "Mandamus vobis quatenus, visis presentibus, desemparetis omnia ea que emparata teneatis a Taragona, sarraceno, et Regina uxore eius, ipsis firmantibus et assecurantibus in posse justicie Muriveteris facere querelantibus de ipsis justicie complementum." Later, Jucef Avinçaprut sued baptized Muslims on behalf of the crown "super facto domorum quas ipsi baptizati tenent in moraria nostra Muriveteris" (ACA: C 49: 64r [1 April 1281]). The converts had probably hoped that their baptism would release them from the responsibility to pay rent for crown properties in the Muslim quarter.

⁶¹ ACA: C 48: 19r (12 May 1280): "Mandamus vobis quatenus compellatis universos et singulos sarracenos Muriveteris et termini sui ad juvandum vos in operibus nostris Muriveteris prout consuetum est in locis aliis sarracenis regni Valencia super similibus." M.D. Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia in the Age of Fernando and Isabel: Between Coexistence and Crusade* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991), 159, 321 nn. 50–51, discusses Mudejars working on crown utilities, such as baths, ovens, and mills, in Alzira, Xàtiva, and Morvedre.

the figure of the Jewish bailiff operating out of Morvedre's castle.⁶² In 1279, for example, Jucef Avinçaprut attempted to exact the *besant* and other taxes from the Muslims of Algar, near Sogorb, a possession of the Mercedarian Order. The Mercedarians protested the bailiff's action.⁶³

The royal bailiffs, Jewish or Christian, were key functionaries in a colonization process that had been transforming Morvedre's urban landscape and giving it the lineaments of a Christian town. The conquerors and their clerical associates had converted the town's main mosque into the church of Santa Maria and organized a parish around it by 1247. In 1248 they initiated the construction of the extramural church of Sant Salvador.⁶⁴ In the 1250s the Valencian church rented out Muslim cemeteries and mosques to Christians.⁶⁵ The 1270s saw new ecclesiastical projects: the Trinitarian hospital and church of Sant Miquel, and the church of Sant Joan.⁶⁶ Morvedre's main church was by 1279 the wealthiest in the diocese outside of the capital; hence the bishop created an archdeaconry there.⁶⁷

⁶² There were as well Jews who were bailiffs of places near Morvedre but not of Morvedre itself, such as Aaron Abinafia, who, as bailiff of Almonesir, collected judicial fines from its Muslim inhabitants. See ACA: C 37: 47v (29 February 1272): "Laudamus et aprobamus [. . .] albaranos diffinitionum quos fidelis baiulus noster Aaron Abinafia fecit sarracenis de Almonezir super caloniis quas dicti sarraceni usque in presentem diem quoquo modo fecerunt." In addition to Jewish bailiffs, there were Jewish tax farmers, like Bonet Çaragoçano of Morvedre, who, as collector of the livestock grazing fee (*herbage*), seized pledges from delinquent Muslim residents of the village of Alcalatén, near Onda (ACA: C 42: 7r [22 February 1280]), or Judah b. Manasseh, who collected the tax on all the kingdom's Muslim households in 1282 and 1283. On him, see Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 282–283; and D. Romano, "Los hermanos Abenmenassé al servicio de Pedro el Grande de Aragón," in *Homenaje a Millás-Vallicrosa*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1954–56), 2: 243–292.

⁶³ ACA: C 42: 183r (1 December 1279): "Ex parte vicarii fratrum Sancte Marie Mercedis captivorum fuit nobis expositum conquerendo quod Juceffus Avinçaprut, judeus baiulus Muriveteris, petit a sarracenis habitantibus in loco de Algar, quem ipsi fratres possident, et hunc ex donatione Raymundi de Morel, bisancium, erbagium atque çoffram, que, ut asserunt ipsi fratres, minime dare tenentur, cum sit locus habens per se terminum." In other words, the Mercedarians were arguing that Algar did not fall within the *terme* of Morvedre and therefore its inhabitants could not be taxed by its bailiff. On 16 February 1280 King Pere ordered Avinçaprut to cease all procedures and to restore all *pignora* confiscated until the case was decided (C 42: 220r), but on 15 October he commanded him to proceed against the Muslims of Algar if the Mercedarians could not display their *cartam donationis* (C 48: 165v). For another case, regarding the Muslims of Albalat, see chap. 2.

⁶⁴ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 86; Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 238, 249–250.

⁶⁵ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 140.

⁶⁶ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 86, 244, and 2: 312; and Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 253.

⁶⁷ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 26, 78–79, and 2: 311–318, for the *Rationes decimarum*,

The Jews had at the same time made their architectural mark on the town's landscape. They founded a synagogue which they progressively enlarged and beautified as the community grew. Sometime before 1305 the Jews abandoned the old synagogue and built a new one next to it.⁶⁸

The Muslims' loss of mosques and cemeteries in Morvedre was, in contrast, the most palpable evidence of the diminution of their community since the initial expulsion and dispossession of a good number of its members in 1248. By 1281 some despairing Muslims had converted to Christianity while others had emigrated to rural villages. In the early fourteenth century the town's *sarraceni baptizati* were more noticeable than its Muslims. At the end of the reign of Jaume II (d. 1327), when the Jewish and Christian populations peaked, the Muslim community was on the point of expiring.⁶⁹

Although the Muslim community inside the town dwindled, Muslims continued to live in the many *alqueries* within and near the town's district, even in those *alqueries* where Jews and Christians had initially been allocated land or in those where they subsequently purchased it.⁷⁰ These Muslims often became the tenants of the Christian

the lists of income from churches in the Valencian diocese in 1279 and 1280. See also Guichard, "Repoblación," 50.

⁶⁸ ACA: C 134: 268r-v (26 March 1305); and C 235: 213r (22 April 1305). See chap. 2 for the harsh reaction of the bishop.

⁶⁹ ACA: C 49: 62r (1 April 1281) regarding *baptizatos* in the *moreria*, on whom see n. 60. ACA: C 235: 66r-v (4 May 1304) [M.T. Ferrer i Mallol, *Els sarraïns de la Corona catalano-aragonesa en el segle XIV: segregació i discriminació* (Barcelona, 1987), 215-216, no. 4] is a letter directed to the bailiff of Morvedre regarding the problem of baptized Muslim women attending Muslim weddings. It is uncertain when in the fourteenth century the Muslim community of Morvedre died out. ACA: C 190: 219r-v (25 June 1327), which mentions the "*contribuione sarracenorum nostrorum* [of the king] dicte ville," is the last reference to a Muslim community inside Morvedre—as opposed to *sarraceni exarichi* in the *alqueries* of the *terme*—that I have encountered. It was not until 1407 that King Martí attempted to reestablish a Muslim *aljama* there—see Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 456-462, no. 5, for the foundation document. C. Díaz de Rábago, *La morería de Castelló de la Plana (1462-1527). Estudio socio-económico de una aljama musulmana medieval* (Castellón, 1994), 24-25, suggests that the Muslim community of Castelló disappeared in the first third of the fourteenth century, and, 37-42, discusses the efforts of the crown to establish a new community in the first half of the fifteenth century. The history of Morvedre's Muslims parallels that of Castelló's.

⁷⁰ In the *alqueries* of Figuerola, Gausa, and Labairén, where Jews initially received property, there were not so many Jewish and Christian grantees—eight, three, and six, respectively—as to suggest that all the Muslim farmers had been displaced or subsequently pressured to leave. But T.F. Glick, *From Muslim fortress to Christian castle: Social and cultural change in medieval Spain* (Manchester, 1995), 135, points out that

and Jewish landowners. While some Jews worked their lands themselves, many Jewish proprietors had other sources of income, such as moneylending and retail commerce, which enabled them to lease their land to Muslim farmers.

There is no evidence from Morvedre regarding the arrangements arrived at between Jewish landlords and the Muslims who cultivated their lands. Some Jews may have hired out Muslims as day laborers to perform specific agricultural tasks; others probably leased their properties to Muslim tenant farmers who paid a fixed rent, or who held the land under some sort of sharecropping arrangement. Tenancy, whether temporary or semi-permanent, in which the Muslim had usufruct of the land, was the arrangement King Jaume and Jewish landlords had envisioned when, in 1262, the monarch exempted Muslims residing on the estates of Jews from paying the annual poll tax—as a “privilege” to the Jews, not the Muslims. It assured Jewish immigrants, who had been given land or who had bought land, a reliable source of labor and income, thereby promoting the long-term stability of the Jewish community. Muslim tenants and Muslim labor constituted the foundation upon which Jewish and Christian immigrant communities developed.⁷¹

parceling out the originally undivided and collectively worked *alqueries* would have been especially disruptive and destabilizing for Muslim rural communities. For the Jews' continuing purchase of land in Morvedre's environs, see above at nn. 45–46. H. Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne morisque* (Paris, 1959), 86–89, and 285–286, map D, shows that the region inland along the Palancia River, which included Morvedre's *terme*, and nearby mountainous zones like the Vall d'Uixó and the Serra d'Eslida continued to be densely settled by Muslims until the *morisco* expulsion of 1609.

⁷¹ The evidence is quite limited regarding patterns of land tenure and the position of Muslim farmers and tenants vis-à-vis Christian and Jewish—particularly Jewish—landlords in the post-conquest decades. ACA: C 144: 178r (1 April 1310) refers to the “sarraceni . . . qui sunt exariquei et morantur in alchareis dictorum hominum Muriveteris.” *Exaricus* (from Arabic *sharīk*) has varied meanings in the Valencian context, ranging from “humble sharecropper” to a more substantial “contract tenant with real but limited ownership rights.” See the discussions of T.F. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages: Comparative Perspectives on Social and Cultural Formation* (Princeton, 1979), 151; *idem*, *From Muslim fortress*, 134–136; Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 39–51; Guichard, “Re población,” 63–82 (esp. 72, where he notes the case of Muslim *exarici* holding lands from the royal physician Samuel b. Manasseh in 1284); J. Torró Abad, *La formació d'un espai feudal: Alcoi de 1245 a 1305* (Valencia, 1992), 232–235; and *idem*, *Naïxement d'una colònia*, 197–199.

Christian settlers, in contrast, were less likely to have worked for Jews; they had not immigrated to Morvedre for that. Muslim labor was abundant, and, like the Jews, Christian proprietors would have preferred to live off the rents from their own lands if they could. However, *contra* J.V. García Marsilla, “Puresa i negoci. El paper dels jueus en la producció i comercialització de queviures a la Corona

A few Jewish proprietors were, as has been seen, more than mere town-dwelling landlords leasing a few *fanecades* here and there to Muslim tenants but the owners—the seigneurs—of entire *alqueries* populated by Muslim and Christian peasants. As a favor to Aaron Abinafia, King Pere exempted all the inhabitants of his hamlets, “both Christian and Saracen,” from various royal taxes.⁷² In 1296 Çalema Barbut, a Jew of Valencia, still possessed an *alqueria* near Morvedre.⁷³ For the Muslim peasants in these hamlets, such Jewish landlords would have appeared very much like the members of one of the families of Christian knights and *generosi*—like rent-collecting authority figures. Whether as landlords of large estates or as royal officials, some Jews formed part of the new ruling elite to whose authority Muslims of the region had to defer.

The initial settlement and reconstruction of the conquered territories, and the pacification of the rebellious Muslim population in the half-century following the conquest created the necessary conditions for the further development of agriculture, industry, and commerce, and for more immigration. From the end of the era of the Jewish bailiffs in 1283 through the first quarter of the fourteenth century the influx of immigrants from Catalonia and Aragon was probably at least as great as in the previous decades.

Morvedre and its *terme* in particular experienced a notable demographic and economic flourishing in the early fourteenth century.⁷⁴

d'Aragó,” *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 4 (1993), 167, I do not think that the prohibition against Jews and Muslims having Christian servants and nurses (*Furs de València*, ed. G. Colón and A. Garcia, 9 vols. [Barcelona, 1970–2002], 2: 81, Llibre I. Rúbrica VIII. II) would have made a difference here. The intent of the law was to prevent Jewish and Muslim religious influence on Christian servants and nurses living in their households; the law would not have precluded Jews leasing out land to Christian tenant farmers or hiring Christian day laborers to farm their lands.

⁷² ACA: C 44: 186v (1 March 1278) [Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 231, no. 11].

⁷³ ACA: C 104: 116v (24 September 1296). Here Çalema was complaining because two Christians, Bonacors Loriguer and Martí Gispert, a court scribe, “injuriuntur sibi super quadam alqueria quam idem Çalema habet apud Murvedre.” ARV: Justicia de Valencia, 6: n.f. (17 December 1299) shows that one member of the Barbut family, Jucef, had moved to Morvedre in the 1290s. On the Barbut family in earlier years, see Burns, *Christians, Muslims, and Jews*, 148–150.

⁷⁴ P. Guichard, “Las transformaciones sociales y económicas,” in *Nuestra historia*, 3: 97–106; A. Rubio Vela, “De l'expansió a la crisi (1304–1347),” in *Història*, 2: 179–185; and Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 291–297, 2: 361. King Alfons II facilitated the process by permitting the town to hold an annual fair on the feast of All Saints (ACA: C 64: 124v [21 September 1286]) and by providing for the apportionment of yet untitled land among its inhabitants—“stabilimenta de quibusdam terris heremis in termino Muriveteris” (ACA: C 83: 73r [13 August 1290]).

The townspeople, and the peasants and lords of the region as well, invested considerable energy and resources in the construction of new irrigation canals, mills, bridges, and ovens.⁷⁵ With growth came conflict over boundaries,⁷⁶ the distribution of precious irrigation water,⁷⁷ access to pasture land and grazing rights,⁷⁸ and fiscal issues.⁷⁹

The Jews, who were contributing to and profiting from the economic boom, also clashed and negotiated with enterprising Christians and the expansionist municipality. The activities of moneylenders, who provided a good amount of the liquid cash needed for rural and urban projects, excited the most controversy.⁸⁰ But as the real estate market heated up and land passed back and forth between Muslims, Jews, and Christians, its fiscal status became a source of conflict. Urban officials complained in 1326 that Jews who had recently bought property (*hereditates ac bona sedentia*) would not agree to pay property taxes to the municipality rather than to the *aljama*.⁸¹

⁷⁵ New irrigation works: ACA: C 115: 197v (22 January 1300), C 156: 54v (16 June 1315), C 159: 262r (21 February 1317); mills: C 156: 224r (2 September 1315), C 246: 212v–213r (2 May 1321), C 173: 212r–v (21 July 1321); bridges: C 172: 86v–87r (2 November 1321), C 188: 42v (30 October 1326), 288r–v (8 March 1327); and ovens: C 133: 10r (20 June 1304).

⁷⁶ ACA: C 137: 11r (26 October 1305), 81r–v (4 January 1306) with Albalat; C 159: 64v–65r (13 November 1316) and C 187: 131v–132r (28 March 1326) with Segart; C 159: 195r (4 January 1317) with the Vall de Segó; and C 144: 226v (1 May 1310) with all the lordships of the *terme*, which included all the above places. Another opponent, Almenara, was a more important seignury and was not part of the *terme*—C 173: 53r (1 May 1321).

⁷⁷ ACA: C 138: 232v (28 May 1306) with Algar; C 170: 112v (21 August 1320) with Estivella; C 351: 237v (19 July 1313) and C 173: 85v (13 May 1321) with Torres-Torres. There were also disputes between villages—ACA: C 174: 32r (9 February 1322): Quartell vs. Quart; and C 185: 35v–36r (21 January 1325): Torres-Torres and Serra vs. Nàquera.

⁷⁸ ACA: C 159: 64v (16 November 1316), 298r (8 March 1317), C 176: 146r–147r (6 September 1322), C 186: 243v (18 August 1325), and C 189: 162v–163r (29 September 1326). Much of this conflict was with the lordship of Segart.

⁷⁹ ACA: C 133: 117r (22 October 1304), C 351: 239v (29 July 1313), C 172: 262r–v (19 January 1322), C 175: 196v–197r (27 July 1322), 199r–v (2 July 1322), 205r–v (3 July 1322), and C 186: 246v (17 August 1325). These disputes arose mainly because the municipality was becoming ever more aggressive in its attempts to collect taxes from peasants inside and outside the *terme*, and from their lords, the knights and *generosi*, a number of whom resided in town.

⁸⁰ See chap. 4.

⁸¹ ACA: C 187: 291r (17 May 1326). The king ordered Barthomeu de Bonastre, a lawyer of Valencia, to render a decision on the question. A different sort of dispute had erupted in 1292, when the municipality appropriated garden property belonging to the heirs of Bahiel Alconstantini with the aim of incorporating it into the town's growing cemetery. The subsequent relocation of the Alconstantinis to

A potential cause of dispute of special interest to town, crown, and the Jewish community was the plan of Marc de Malonda, a Christian resident of Morvedre, to establish, "for the public utility," a new village on irrigated land located near the baths outside the town's walls. There was, however, one stumbling block: the *aljama* had acquired the land as allodial property, by virtue of the pious bequest of a local Jew, Bonet de Linas, who in his will had instructed that the rent collected from the tenants be distributed as alms among poor Jews. Malonda regarded this property as integral to his plans for a profitable agrarian enterprise because it had an oil press on site. Lest the *aljama* and its poor be prejudiced in the deal, King Jaume arranged for Malonda to give the *aljama* property of equal value in exchange for the land which would become part of the "Pobla d'En Marc de Malonda."⁸²

The demographic trajectory of Morvedre's Jewish community in the early fourteenth century corresponded to the kingdom-wide trend.⁸³ By 1305 the community, as has been noted, had to build a new synagogue to accommodate its expanding population. In 1321 Jaume II permitted the Jews of Morvedre to create a walled *jueria* in the

Zaragoza enabled the municipality to keep the land and to avoid indemnifying the heirs for years (ACA: C 141: 77v [29 November 1307]).

⁸² ACA: C 171: 104v (18 January 1321), 215r-v (11 March), and 283r-v (13 April). The matter generated so much paper because the *aljama* initially disagreed that the property Malonda was offering in exchange equaled the value of the legacy of Bonet de Linas. A satisfactory arrangement was concluded, for Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 361, notes the existence of a "Pobla d'En Marc de Malonda" listed in a register, dated 1335, of the Archivo Municipal de Murviedro, whose medieval records are no longer extant.

⁸³ There is some evidence of Jewish immigration from Tortosa in the early fourteenth century. Jews in Tortosa, near the southern border of Catalonia, were more easily drawn to the new kingdom lying at their doorstep. Jaffia Aborrabe began by making some financial investments in Morvedre's *terme* sometime before 1313 (hence his objection to the *aljama* of Morvedre's efforts to tax him [ACA: C 351: 242r]). By 1320 he and his son Efraim had settled in the town (ACA: C 170: 269r-v). Marriage to the daughter of Gento Asseyo seems to have brought Bonet Avincanes from Tortosa to Morvedre—on his activities and involvement in the "wax-press affair," see chap. 3. ACA: C 289: 164r (22 August 1310) concerns the debt of 300 sous owed to Vidal Xicatella of Tortosa by the heirs of Bonet Avincanes and his widow, Dulçina, all of Tortosa. The Bonet Avincanes active in Morvedre in the 1320s was probably the grandson or nephew of the deceased Bonet. ACA: C 142: 47v (27 May 1308) treats the loans of Samuel Avincanes, then an inhabitant of Sant Mateu in the northern part of the kingdom of Valencia, to Christians of Moncofa, located between Borriana and Morvedre. This shows another member of Tortosa's Avincanes clan gradually pushing south into Valencian territory. His precise relation to Bonet of Morvedre is unknown.

town. While security was the main concern prompting the Jews' request for an enclosed and defensible *jueria*, the point to be made in a demographic context is that there already existed a substantial and recognizable Jewish neighborhood.⁸⁴ In fact, the Jewish population was already overflowing its borders, and purchasing so many houses in Christian neighborhoods that the vicar of the local church feared the loss of oblations rendered by the erstwhile Christian residents.⁸⁵ More Jewish houses meant of course more Jewish graves. Hence in 1328 Alfons III allowed the Jews to establish "another cemetery . . . under the castle . . . to which their corpses can be brought for Jewish burial."⁸⁶

By this time, the end of the era of colonization, Morvedre housed a medium-sized Jewish community of some fifty to sixty families, or two hundred to three hundred individuals, substantial, although dwarfed by the *aljama* of Valencia, which had nearly five times as many families.⁸⁷ This conservative estimate is based on a document recording the crown's indemnification, in January 1352, of forty-five Jewish household heads—the great majority but not all of the householders—for the material losses they had sustained as a result of the Valencian Union's attack on Morvedre in November 1348.⁸⁸ The

⁸⁴ ACA: C 219: 344v (5 May 1321): "Noveritis nos concessisse et dedisse judeis habitantibus in dicta villa Muriveteris quod pro tutiori eorum custodia possint judariam in qua habitant claudere muro vel tapiis prout melius eis videbitur quod sint clausi." This document is transcribed by Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 332, n. 2, but with some errors.

⁸⁵ ACA: C 171: 116r-v (4 February 1321). The letter mentions Muslim buyers as well, but given the negligible intramural Muslim population, Jews were clearly the main concern. Jaume II decided that the Jewish buyers should render the accustomed oblations to the vicar, unless they had abandoned some homes in the Jewish quarter which were now inhabited by Christians; in such cases, the vicar should collect the oblations from the latter. See C 171: 254r-v (3 April 1321) for additional complications.

⁸⁶ ACA: C 478: 181r (24 March 1328) [transcribed in Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 333, n. 1]: "concessimus aliam judeorum dicti loci quod habeant aliud cimiterium . . . subtus castrum . . . locum de illa longitudine et amplitudine . . . in quo eorum cadavera ebraice tradi valeant sepulture." It is true, though, that the small Jewish community in Borriana had also been burying its dead in Morvedre's Jewish cemetery until 19 November 1326, when Jaume II licensed it to establish its own cemetery. See J. Doñate Sebastià and J.R. Magdalena Nom de Déu, *Three Jewish Communities in Medieval Valencia: Castellón de la Plana, Burriana, Villarreal*, trans. S. Nakache and E. Gutwirth (Jerusalem, 1990), 198–199, no. 2.

⁸⁷ Baer, *History*, 1: 189–195; Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 137–138.

⁸⁸ AMV: Letres del Rey (1348–1356), no. 2 (20 January 1352) [This document is transcribed in Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 429–433, no. 10, although I have not been able to locate it in the AMV. Apparently the register has been lost since Chabret's

community, however, was certainly larger in 1328, for it subsequently endured considerable economic difficulty, and, most importantly, the Black Death sometime between May and August 1348—all this before the Union's sacking of the *jueria* the following November. Between May 1348 and January 1352 at least twenty-five Jewish men and one Jewish woman died.⁸⁹ Given that there were some 6,000 Christians in Morvedre by 1328, the Jews comprised roughly three percent of the town's population.⁹⁰

The Jewish community was large enough to be both economically diversified and socially stratified, as two sets of regulations issued to the *aljama* in June 1327 indicate. One set established an electoral

day.J. Baer, *History*, 1: 422, n.9, came up with a total of forty-seven householders. I suspect that he counted Jucef Ballester and Içach Acrix twice, as both of them appear in the list twice, in their own names and as the guardian or heir of someone else. A royal letter written soon after the Union's attack—ACA: C 655: 58r–v (24 November 1348)—states that “almost all the goods you [the Jews] possessed there were unduly plundered and stolen from you by the said rebels” (“quod fere bona omnia que inibi possidebatis per dictos nobis rebelles vobis usurpata ac depredata indebite extiterunt”). For more on this event and related demographic calculations, see M.D. Meyerson, “Victims and Players: The Attack of the Union of Valencia on the Jews of Morvedre,” in *Religion, Text, and Society in Medieval Spain and Northern Europe: Studies in Honor of J.N. Hillgarth*, eds. T. Burman, M. Meyerson, L. Shopkow (Toronto, 2002), 70–102; and chap. 5.

⁸⁹ There is no way of fully assessing the demographic impact of the Black Death on Morvedre. However, it certainly arrived there—see J. Trenchs Odena, “El reino de Valencia y la Peste de 1348. Datos para su estudio,” in *Estudios de Historia de Valencia* (Valencia, 1978), 47. See chaps. 3–5 for more on the fortunes of the Jews during the fourteenth-century difficulties; and Meyerson, “Victims and Players,” for the calculation of Jewish deaths between 1348 and 1352.

⁹⁰ In 1355 there were 1,435 Christian households, or approximately 5,740 individuals. Since Christians also suffered during the 1330s and 1340s, their numbers would have been larger in 1328. J.C. Russell, “The Medieval Monedatge of Aragon and Valencia,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 106:6 (1962), 495–496; and J. Hinojosa Montalvo, “Apuntes para la demografía de la aljama judía de Sagunto en los siglos bajomedievales,” *Sefarad*, 55:2 (1995), 276, for the numbers of Christians in 1355 and 1361. A. Rubio Vela, *Peste negra, crisis y comportamientos sociales en la España del siglo XIV. La ciudad de Valencia (1348–1401)* (Granada, 1979), 103–110, discusses the difficulties in determining the long-term effect of the Black Death and subsequent outbreaks of plague on the city and kingdom of Valencia. He notes, however, that whereas the rural areas seem to have suffered from underpopulation from the late fourteenth century, the city of Valencia itself, a major urban center, was continually replenished by immigration from rural areas. It is difficult to know where to place Morvedre, an agro-town located near the capital, in the rural-urban dichotomy drawn by Rubio. Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 361–362, notes that a number of the small villages which existed in the *terme* of Morvedre in 1335 were depopulated from the mid-fourteenth century on. As for the Jewish percentage of Morvedre's total population, it is interesting that in 1379, according to the *morabatí* tax registers, the Jews comprised 3.3 percent of the total—Hinojosa, “Demografía,” 280.

system for the *aljama* and required the participation of members of the upper, middle, and lower classes. Although the precise social meaning of such class denominations is uncertain, there clearly was a wide spectrum of affluence and marked economic stratification among Morvedre's Jews.⁹¹ The second set, which regulated a wide range of sales-taxes (*cises*) to be levied on transactions involving Jews, mentions Jews engaged in wine production and other agrarian pursuits, in moneylending, commerce, and brokerage, and in crafts, such as shoemaking and silverwork.⁹²

The Jews had secured niches for themselves in the regional economy by making the best of Morvedre's location and geography. Situated on rich alluvial lands near the mouth of the Palancia River, Morvedre was, when the first Jewish settlers arrived, already surrounded by a highly cultivated and irrigated garden region, or *horta*. The soil was well suited for viticulture, and the town's position on the Mediterranean coast facilitated the transport of wine. The coastal royal road (*camí real*) afforded the inhabitants of Morvedre relatively easy access to Valencia, located less than 25 kilometers to the south, and to towns to the north, like Almenara, Nules, Borriana, and Castelló. The Palancia River valley facilitated travel to the villages of the interior. Mobility was, early on, a hallmark of the Jews' economic life.

The Jews were never far from the soil. They settled in a town with a long history of viticulture and wine production, though the latter in particular had declined under Muslim rule.⁹³ Steadily acquir-

⁹¹ ACA: C 230: 59r (24 June 1327): "vobis [the bailiff general] dicimus et mandamus quatenus, visis presentibus, eligatis sex judeos dicte aljame, duos videlicet de manu maiori, duos de mediocri et alios duos de minori, qui per duos annos sequentes elegant secretarios, adenantatos et receptores compotorum et officiales alios ac res necessarias et utiles dicte aljame."

⁹² ACA: C 230: 60r–63v (18 June 1327) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 408–422, no. 8].

⁹³ V. Simó Santoja, *Nuestros vinos/Els nostres vins* (Valencia, 1980), 19–22; and E. Guinot, "El mercat local del vi a la València medieval," in *Vinyes i vins: mil anys d'història*, ed. E. Giralt, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1993), 1: 431–432, regarding wine production in Roman Saguntum and Muslim Murbîtar. O.R. Constable, *Trade and traders in Muslim Spain: The commercial realignment of the Iberian peninsula, 900–1500* (Cambridge, 1994), 162, 184–185, 230–231, points out that despite the Islamic prohibition of the consumption of wine, wine was widely available in al-Andalus. Restrictions on consumption, however, probably intensified under the Almoravids and Almohads. In any case, wine was not exported, though raisins and grapes were. In the early modern period, the production of wine for export was, in the words of J.M. Iborra Lerma, *Realengo y señorío en el Camp de Morvedre* (Sagunto, 1981), 150, "the motor of the economy of the Camp de Morvedre." See also R. Benítez Sánchez-

ing more and more land, through royal grant and purchase, the Jewish and Christian immigrants extended viticulture in the area in order to meet the demands of their growing communities for wine.⁹⁴ The Jews directed most of their agricultural activity toward wine production, primarily to provision their own and other Jewish communities, but with the secondary aim of selling some of the vintage to the much larger Christian population of the region.

Jews quickly emerged as key middlemen in Morvedre's developing wine trade. King Jaume licensed Abraham Abinafia to export to Valencia "all your wine that you make in Morvedre." If Abraham in fact exercised stewardship over his brother Aaron's extensive lands, then he must have collected or purchased the vintage from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish farmers.⁹⁵ After Abraham moved to Valencia in 1280, King Pere put the bailiff Jucef Avinçaprut in control of Morvedre's export trade in wine. Anyone exporting wine from Morvedre and its *terme* needed his license, and no one was allowed to impede the progress of these merchants.⁹⁶ Outside of town the

Blanco, "Técnicas de cultivo de la vid y elaboración del vino en el 'Camp de Morvedre' a fines del siglo XVII," in *Món mediterrani. Jornades sobre la viticultura de la conca mediterrània* (Tarragona, 1986), 206–219.

⁹⁴ The Muslims probably did not appreciate this. M. Ruzafa García, "Señores cristianos y campesinos mudéjares en País Valenciano (siglo XV)," in *Señorío y feudalismo en la Península Ibérica (ss. XIV–XV)*, ed. E. Sarasa Sánchez and E. Serrano Martín, 4 vols. (Zaragoza, 1993), 3: 426, shows that as late as 1430 the bailiff general still had to exercise his authority to compel Muslims to plant vineyards in the Serra d'Esilda. P. Horden and N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford, 2000), 219, point out that cash-crop viticulture "has been associated particularly with 'colonial' landscapes or areas of resettlement."

⁹⁵ King Jaume originally issued the license which King Pere renewed. ACA: C 44: 180r (16 December 1279): "Concedimus et confirmamus tibi Abraham Abinaffia, judeo Muriveteris, concessionem tibi factam per dominum Jacobum et cetera, scilicet quod licet tibi ponere et poni facere intus civitatem Valencie quandocumque volueris quolibet anno totum vinum tuum quod facies in Muroveteri." Abraham needed the license because King Jaume had, in 1268, granted the municipality of Valencia the privilege of protecting its own wine-makers by prohibiting the importation of all wine from outside the city's *terme* (Guinot, "Mercat local del vi," 434). See above at n. 13 for his brother's holdings. Abraham's growing commerce with clients in Valencia probably led to his transfer there.

⁹⁶ ACA: C 48: 166r (15 October 1280): "Universis, quod dominus Rex concedit Juceffo Auinzaprich, baiulo Muriveteris, quod det licenciam quibuscumque volentibus extrahere vinum de Muroveteri vel terminis suis ipsis componentibus inde secum et absque licencia sua nullus inde vinum extrahat. Quare mandat dominus Rex quatenus quibuscumque extrahentibus vinum de dicto loco seu terminis suis cum albarano dicti Juceffi et portantibus ubique nullum impedimentum vel contrarium faciant." It is significant that at the bottom of 166r, R. Escorna, the royal scribe, is licensed to export 2,000 *quartanorum* of wine to Mallorca. Even if this was

thirst for Morvedre's wine was clearly growing. In 1286 King Alfons himself sought for his own use the wine of Llíria and Morvedre, "or something better" if it could be found.⁹⁷

The passing of Jewish bailiffs and Jewish lords of *alqueries* from the scene did not hamper Jewish participation in Morvedre's wine trade.⁹⁸ In their efforts to promote and regulate the wine trade in the early fourteenth century, municipal officials did not do anything prejudicial to the interests of local Jewish wine-makers and vintners.⁹⁹ As far as they were concerned, there was plenty of business for Jews as well as Christians. Jews and Christians sometimes formed partnerships. In 1319, for example, Joan de Montclus, a local Christian wine-maker, gave a local Jew, Salamó Aluleyex, 300 jugs (*gerras*) of wine *in comanda* for export to Barcelona.¹⁰⁰

Christians did not view the Jews as competition, because they and

not wine from Morvedre, it at least reflects the development of a substantial export trade in Valencian wines. Small surprise that Jucef's brother, Salamó, also got involved in the wine business (ACA: C 85: 118v). See Torró, *Naixement d'una colònia*, 158, 176, on the importance of wine production for the market.

⁹⁷ ACA: C 71: 2v: "de vino Lirie ac Muriveteris seu alio meliori quod possetis invenire . . . ad opus nostri usque ad III mille quartanorum."

⁹⁸ There is evidence of Jews acquiring and possessing vineyards after 1300. For example, ACA: C 128: 136r–137r (17 May 1303), which mentions Jucef Bonet's purchase of a vineyard in Gausa from a Christian widow; and C 141: 186v (31 January 1308), which treats the complaint of the Jew Vives de Hinos that the secretaries of the *aljama* unjustly sold his vineyard for the price of 500 sous to the Christian Jaume Bargaloni. The secretaries probably acted thus because of some outstanding taxes of Vives.

⁹⁹ ACA: C 138: 140r (5 March 1306) and 165v (8 April) treat the complaints of local Christians about new municipal ordinances prohibiting the sale of wine from individual households. The *jurats* probably aimed to control the quality of wine sold and to protect the interests of established local merchants, brokers, and tavern-keepers. At the same time, the municipality resisted any action that might dampen the export business, such as when the royal collectors of the *lleuda*, a commercial tariff, exacted it "against custom . . . from merchants buying wine in the said town of Morvedre or its *terme*" (ACA: C 160: 169r [21 May 1316]). ACA: C 167: 95r–v (29 March 1319) is a similar protest. See Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 85–96, for the various commercial tariffs.

¹⁰⁰ ACA: C 167: 122v (20 April 1319): "Cum Salamon Aluleyex, judeus dicti loci Muriveteris, asportari fecerit trecentas gerras plenas vino apud civitatem Barchinone que, ut asserit, sunt Johannis de Montclus, vicini dicti loci, qui eas dicto judeo tradidit in comanda . . ." Here King Jaume ordered the local justice to provide Salamó with the proper papers, or certification, "cum non verisimilis videatur cristianos comandam deponere penes judeos." The extensive *cisa* regulations of the *aljama* note the Jews' formation of "companies" with Christians (ACA: C 230: 60r–63v). An example of a commercial society among Christians is that formed by the Mansó brothers of Morvedre with Guillem de Soler of Tarragona for the export of Morvedre wine to Mallorca (ACA: C 189: 223v [28 August 1326]).

the Jews operated in parallel spheres of production and commerce, which, as the decades passed, had come to overlap less and less. In contrast to Abraham Abinafia and Jucef Avinçaprut, who had dealt at least as much with Christian as with Jewish consumers and vintners, Jews in the fourteenth century increasingly confined themselves to the manufacture and sale of *kasher* wine, for which there was a considerable market. Christians, of course, could not compete with the Jews here and concentrated on a Christian clientele. If Joan de Montclus relied on Salamó Aluleyex to export his wine to Barcelona, it was perhaps because Salamó had already exported *kasher* wine there and knew the city.¹⁰¹ Jews and Christians of Morvedre involved in the wine business could thus assist each other without stepping on one another's toes.

The wine-makers and merchants of Morvedre benefited from the protectionist legislation of 1298, in which Jaume II had, at the request of the capital and other towns, prohibited the import of wine from outside the kingdom.¹⁰² They could then supply any Valencian towns or villages whose inhabitants could not manufacture enough wine for themselves.¹⁰³ Other Valencian Jewish communities looked to Morvedre when they needed *kasher* wine. The Jews of Elx imported wine, and Jews traveled from Xàtiva to Morvedre to buy and sell "victuals as well as merchandise."¹⁰⁴

The most lucrative market for Morvedre's wine industry was of course the city of Valencia. Despite the capital's protectionist legislation, both the Christian and Jewish vintners of Morvedre obtained

¹⁰¹ J. Riera i Sans, "La conflictivitat de l'alimentació dels jueus medievals (segles XII–XV)," in *Alimentació i societat a la Catalunya medieval* (Barcelona, 1988), 303, points out that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Jews of major Catalan *aljamas* could not produce enough *kasher* wine for themselves and thus had to import it. If Christians of Morvedre were exporting wine to Barcelona and Mallorca, there is no reason to think that local Jews were not doing the same thing. Salamó Aluleyex obviously had some experience in transporting wine.

¹⁰² Guinot, "Mercat local del vi," 435.

¹⁰³ As Guinot, "Mercat local del vi," shows, most towns, royal and seigneurial, had laws protecting local wine-makers, particularly in the months after the annual vintage. However, during the rest of the year, when local resources might not have sufficed, and especially in years of a poor harvest, the wine industry of Morvedre would have profited.

¹⁰⁴ ACA: C 167: 237r (8 July 1319), regarding the complaint of the Jews of Elx that the municipality is not allowing them to import *kasher* wine; and C 190: 213r (20 June 1327), in which the Jews of Xàtiva protest their liability to the sales-taxes levied by the *aljama* of Morvedre when they go there to deal "tam de victualibus quam de mercimoniis."

permission from Jaume II to export wine there.¹⁰⁵ The *aljama* of Valencia did not object to the importation of wine from Morvedre as long as it could collect a sales-tax from “foreign” Jewish merchants selling wine in Valencia or from its own members who purchased wine outside the *terme* of the capital for resale in the city.¹⁰⁶

The wineshops and homes in the Jewish quarter of Valencia were not the only destinations of the *kasher* wine imported into the city from Morvedre. Some of it was shipped abroad through the port of Valencia. Hence the local *adelantats* collected an export duty from the producer or from the local middleman before the wine was loaded onto vessels in the port.¹⁰⁷ Of course, winegrowers in Morvedre with an eye to the market outside the kingdom need not have exported all of their product through the capital. The short-distance coastal trade linking Morvedre to Catalan ports may well have suited some of their purposes. Overland trade routes tying the kingdom of Valencia to Aragon proper or even Castile would have served others.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ ACA: C 191: 99r (13 September 1327). Here the municipality of Morvedre complains that the *jurats* of Valencia are not obeying the earlier decision of the royal judge, Ferrer de Manresa, in which “concessum sit hominibus dicte ville [Morvedre] quod possint defferri seu invecti facere in dicta civitate vinum in cellariis vel domibus propriis seu alterius inibique vendere.” S. Epstein, *An island for itself: Economic development and social change in late medieval Sicily* (Cambridge, 1992), 134–136, offers an interesting point of comparison in regard to a regional wine trade. In Sicily, Palermo played the role that Valencia had in the kingdom.

¹⁰⁶ ACA: C 381: 166v–169r (13 July 1327). In this very damaged document, Prince Alfons confirms the *aljama*’s emendation of its ordinances regarding the levying of sales-taxes. The amendments were in part meant to protect local Jewish vintners from the competition of “foreign Jews”: “Primerament, que com alguns juheus estrayns de la dita ciutat [. . .] llen vi juhenesch aportar a vendre en la dita ciutat, lo qual poria tolre la venda a aquells juheus qui son [de la] dita ciutat. . . .” However, since the members of this huge *aljama* could not produce sufficient *kasher* wine, the *aljama* had no choice but to permit the “foreigners” to import wine. The text of this document does not mention Morvedre specifically, but given its proximity to Valencia and its importance as a center for wine production, it was obviously the origin of the “foreign” *kasher* wine and of the “foreign” Jewish vintners. Just a few weeks earlier, the *aljama* of Morvedre had complained—unsuccessfully—about the Jews of Valencia collecting sales-taxes from its members who bought and sold “victuals as well as merchandise” in the capital (ACA: C 190: 209r [19 June]). In this period *aljamas* and municipalities were all establishing systems of internal taxation primarily for the purpose of expediting the payment of taxes to the crown. “Foreigners” initially complained but they ultimately adjusted to the new fiscal regime.

¹⁰⁷ ACA: C 381: 166v–169r: “Et si lo dit vi volra navegar, lo dit juheu [the “foreign” Jewish producer/merchant], o altre per ell, dege pagar altra mealla per quascun quarter ans que dins lo mar lo aia mes en [vexell nengu], no contrastant que altra [mealla] agues pagada al engerrar o enbotar.”

¹⁰⁸ Iborra, *Camp de Morvedre*, 140–150, treats overland and maritime commerce in the early modern period; and see M.D. Meyerson, *A Jewish Renaissance in Fifteenth-*

Establishing which Jewish communities outside the kingdom of Valencia purchased wine from Morvedre in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is difficult. If Morvedre's *kasher* wine trade paralleled its Christian wine trade, then the Jews of Mallorca and Barcelona were probably buyers.¹⁰⁹ Reading back from fifteenth-century evidence leads to the surmise that there was also Jewish clientele in Tortosa (Catalonia), Teruel (Aragon), North Africa, and Sardinia.¹¹⁰

Because of the importance of the wine trade for the Jewish community, *aljama* officials gave it considerable attention in the sales-tax ordinances of 1327. The ordinances provided for the collection of a tax from every Jewish man or woman of Morvedre "who makes wine" within the municipal district or even in other places in the kingdom, whether he or she made the wine from the vintage of his or her own vineyards or from vintage purchased elsewhere. Producers who retailed their wine in Morvedre as well as those who exported their product were liable to pay additional taxes.¹¹¹

The wine in question was certainly *kasher* wine (or *vi juhenesch*), even though the ordinances do not explicitly describe it as such.¹¹²

Century Spain (Princeton, 2004), chap. 3. Epstein, *Island for itself*, 136, points out that in Sicily the main wine-making towns were located on the coast because of the relative ease of transporting large quantities of wine from them.

¹⁰⁹ See n. 100.

¹¹⁰ ACA: C 187: 251r-v (9 May 1326) shows that Jews of the kingdom of Valencia regularly traded in Tortosa; here the Jews demand that the bailiff of Tortosa observe their exemption from all commercial tariffs. ACA: C 2156: 117r (7 June 1408), which states that the Jewish community of Tortosa "se va despoblant per la gran fretura que han de vin," shows that it sometimes depended on imports, perhaps from Morvedre. See Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 3, for the evidence on the export of wine to Teruel, North Africa, and Sardinia. With regard to Sardinia, however, it may be of some significance that in 1367 the sailor Joan Lup, acting as *procurador* of Jaume Carroç, resident of Cagliari, filed suit against David el Rau and other Jews of Morvedre for the money they owed Carroç (ACA: C 1614: 112r). Nevertheless, the data on Jewish commerce compiled by C. Tasca, *Gli ebrei in Sardegna nel XIV secolo. Società, cultura, istituzioni* (Cagliari, 1992), 191-239, which shows plenty of commerce in wine, including "*sardesch* wine," reveals nothing about wine imported from Valencia or Morvedre.

¹¹¹ ACA: C 230: 60r-63v (18 June 1327) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 408-422, no. 8]. The first five of the fifty-five *cisa* ordinances all dealt with taxing the manufacture and sale of wine. The rate of taxation was one *mayla* (*mealla*, or half-diner) for each *quarter* (.336 liters) of wine crushed (*follat*) and put in jars or casks. Exporters paid an additional *mealla* per *quarter*, while those retailing wine in Morvedre paid two diners per *quarter* sold. Jews who were not members of the *aljama* of Morvedre but who manufactured wine within the *terme* were also subject to the same taxes.

¹¹² The ordinances' mention of Jews crushing and bottling or barreling the wine—that is, of Jews controlling the production process—indicates that *kasher* wine was the object of taxation.

There was, however, some ambiguity with regard to the identity of the possible buyers. While communal officials no doubt assumed that Jews, whether locals or outsiders, would be the principal customers, they did not rule out the sale of *kasher* wine to Christians.¹¹³

Not only were non-Jews potential customers, they were also involved in the wine production process, at least at the early stages. *Aljama* officials understood that the Christian and Muslim tenants of Jewish landlords were at least sometimes cultivating the grapes, not the Jews themselves.¹¹⁴ Thus when they imposed a levy on the rents which the landlords received from their tenants “of whatever law [religion],” they cited the vintage as comprising part of the rent, but then excluded it from the levy since the wine manufactured therefrom was already being taxed.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, although the 1327 ordinances describe the Jewish producer as having “crushed” the wine, Muslims and especially Christians often trod the grapes. By the fourteenth century halakhic authorities in both northern and

¹¹³ Valencian clergymen quickly developed a taste for wine produced by Jews, as synodal legislation from 1262 shows—I. Pérez de Heredia y Valle, “Sínodos medievales de Valencia: edición bilingüe,” *Anthologica annua*, 40 (1993), 578, “De vino judeorum non bibendo.” Riera, “Alimentació,” 303, notes that Pere III in 1345 permitted the Jews of Teruel to sell their surplus wine to Christians.

¹¹⁴ As stated above, there is very little specific evidence about the arrangements between Jewish landlords and Muslim or Christian tenants around Morvedre. Like other landlords, Jews probably leased their land, including vineyards, to tenants by enfiteutic contract, on the details of which see, e.g., A. Furió, *Camperols del País Valencià. Sueca, una comunitat rural a la tardor de l'Edat Mitjana* (Valencia, 1982), 106–119. There is solid evidence of Jews renting out vineyards through enfiteusis in Xàtiva. ACA: C 177: 44r–v (5 March 1322) treats a lawsuit between the Jew Astruc Abecç and a Christian family regarding “quandam peciam terre cum olivario et vinea que pro dicto Astrugo in emphiteosim tenebant.” A. Blasco Martínez, “La producción y comercialización del vino entre los judíos de Zaragoza (siglo XIV),” *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 19 (1989), 406–416, presents evidence of Jews leasing or subletting vineyards to Christians, and concludes that the Jews of Zaragoza almost never engaged in viticulture themselves. M.A. Motis Dolader, “Régimen de explotación de las propiedades agrarias judías en el noroeste del reino de Aragón en el siglo XV,” *Hispania*, 48 (1988), 443–450, presents evidence to the contrary for other towns in Aragon. See Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 3, for further discussion in regard to the wine industry in fifteenth-century Morvedre.

¹¹⁵ The ordinances (ACA: C 230: 60r–63v) also mention Jews purchasing grapes from the vineyards of others as well as selling the vintage from their own vineyards. While the Jews’ extensive ownership and leasing of vineyards made recourse to Christian or Muslim viticulturists less necessary, Jewish wine-makers would have sought the best grapes at the best prices. J. Hinojosa Montalvo, “Actividades judías en la Valencia del siglo XIV,” in *La ciudad hispánica durante los siglos XIII al XVI*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1985), 2: 1553–1554, cites instances of Jews of Valencia buying grapes from Christian farmers in Alboraya and Sueca. See also Blasco, “Vino,” 419–422, for details on Zaragoza.

southern Europe had accepted the possibility, if not the probability, of Gentiles treading the grapes.¹¹⁶ Later *cisa* ordinances for the Morvedre community make it clear that Jewish wine-makers frequently purchased the must tread in vats owned by Christians.¹¹⁷ Even though the Jews' manufacture of wine on a large scale should not, apparently, have necessitated Gentile treading or the purchase of must from Christians, the very scale of production and the intense participation of both Jews and Christians in the wine trade since the days of initial settlement had led to Jewish-Christian collaboration on a number of levels.

If the geographical features of the lower Palancia made the manufacture of wine on a large scale a viable and profitable enterprise for the Catalan and Aragonese Jews settling in Morvedre, prior experience as well as the royal and canonical censure of Christian usury made moneylending an obvious choice of livelihood for the Jews, especially for the wealthier immigrants.¹¹⁸ Jaume I established the Jews as the main purveyors of credit in the new kingdom by authorizing them to lend at the rate of interest already set for Catalan and Aragonese Jews—twenty percent of the principal—and by forbidding Christian knights to make usurious loans or to make sales on credit with interest.¹¹⁹ At an early point in the colonization of Morvedre, Christian peasants and artisans were thus being directed to Jewish lenders for their credit needs and away from the Christian military class who dominated them in other ways.

¹¹⁶ As explained by H. Soloveitchik, "Can Halakhic Texts Talk History?" *Association for Jewish Studies Review*, 3 (1978), 172–173, "so long as the crushed grapes remained interspersed with the wine," Jews did not need to "guard against gentile contact." Thus *aljama* officials in Morvedre (ACA: C 230: 60r–63v) required the wine-makers to show the collectors of the *cisa* the wine they had manufactured within three days of its "exit from the vat" (*tret del cup*), that is, when the crushed grapes were separated from the juice (or wine) and Gentile contact was prohibited. See also A. Toaff, *Love, Work, and Death: Jewish Life in Medieval Umbria* (London, 1996), 74–83.

¹¹⁷ See Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 3.

¹¹⁸ Here I am merely sketching the beginnings of moneylending among the Jews of Morvedre with some apposite comments on lending to Muslims in a colonial context. Because the issue of Jewish usury was so consequential for Jewish-Christian relations, I am treating the mechanics and politics of Jewish lending to Christians separately in chap. 4.

¹¹⁹ Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 15–27, for the earlier, especially Catalan, legislation. ACA: C 16: 239v (25 October 1271), where Jaume I confirms the privilege of the Jews of Morvedre to lend money *ad cotum*; and *Furs*, 4: 106: Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. XI, for the proscription of usury by knights. See also Torró, *Naixement d'una colònia*, 180–183.

Jewish credit was crucial for the economic development of a kingdom that experienced, especially in the post-conquest decades, a shortage of capital.¹²⁰ Immigrant Christian and indigenous Muslim farmers, for instance, needed money to purchase land, seed, tools, and livestock.¹²¹ Some Jewish immigrants, in Morvedre and other urban centers, who probably had been lenders in Catalonia and Aragon, possessed the capital to meet their demands. Many lenders were not only affluent but often wielded power in the *aljama* as well.¹²² Still, not all the lenders of the Morvedre community were wealthy. Since moneylending was rarely, if ever, the sole occupation of an individual Jew and was often merely a supplementary source of income, Jewish artisans and retailers of middling wealth sometimes tried their hand at it. After all, one did not need huge reserves of capital to make a few small loans to struggling peasants.¹²³

¹²⁰ F. Garcia Oliver, "De Perpinyà a Elx. Desenvolupament econòmic i geografia de les aljames," in *Xudeus e conversos na história*, ed. C. Barros (Santiago de Compostela, 1994), 2: 256; and R.W. Emery, *The Jews of Perpignan in the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 1959), 106–107, whose comments would apply even more strongly to the recently conquered kingdom of Valencia.

¹²¹ The *cisa* ordinances of 1327 (ACA: C 230: 60r–63v) list, as a matter of course, among the wide range of taxable Jewish transactions, loans "to Christians or to Saracens."

¹²² This conclusion is hardly surprising and accords with evidence presented by Emery, *Jews of Perpignan*, 27–29; A. Furió, "Diners i crèdit. Els jueus d'Alzira en la segona meitat del segle XIV," *Revista d'Història Medieval* 4 (1993), 140; and E. Lourie, "Jewish Moneylenders in the Local Catalan Community, c. 1300: Vilafranca del Penedès, Besalú and Montblanc," *Michael* 11 (1989), 62, esp. n. 64, where she cites a document from 1306 regarding the *aljama* of Valencia (ACA: Real Audiencia, Procesos, leg. 135/8) in which "[t]here is evidence of a clear demarcation between the Jews 'qui exercent usuras' and the rest."

There are many examples of the linkage between wealth, moneylending, and power among the Jews of Morvedre. The royal bailiff Jucef Avinçaprut lent money (ACA: C 81: 178r [1 September 1290]). The lender Samuel Passarell was so wealthy that he was compelled to "lend" 2,000 sous to King Alfons in 1287 (ACA: C 71: 49v [6 May]). His relative Isaac, also a lender, served as *adelantat* in the early fourteenth century (ACA: C 104: 75r [5 September 1296]; CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2678 [27 May 1306]; C 373: 173v–174r [1 May 1325]). On one occasion another lender, Jucef Bonet, acted as *adelantat* along with Isaac Passarell (ACA: C 89: 47v [11 December 1294]; C 373: 173v–174r]). Jucef Algehen, whose affluence is indicated by the size of his loans and his noble clientele, had a relative named Samuel who was elected *adelantat* in 1306 (ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2678; see chap. 4 at n. 34). Members of the rich and powerful Coffe clan, who held various posts in *aljama* government in the first half of the fourteenth century, invested heavily in loans (ACA: C 138: 160r [29 March 1306]; CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 72 [2 November 1324]; C 187: 214v [28 April 1326]; C 647: 130r [11 May 1347]; see chap. 3).

¹²³ Some lenders do not appear to have been distinguished either by wealth or

The Jews' conduct of moneylending, and of a related activity, tax farming, was shaped by and integral to the agrarian economy and its rhythms. This was the case not only because of the agricultural orientation of Morvedre itself, for whose Christian and Muslim residents the local Jews were the main source of credit, but also and more importantly because the Jews extended credit to the tenants of seigneuries in the town's wider district and of lordships further afield. Like the Jewish moneylenders in other Valencian cities and towns, those in Morvedre carved out their own rural sphere of operations, thereby strengthening the bonds of dependency tying countryside to town.¹²⁴ The range of operations of Morvedre's lenders was wider than that of their counterparts resident in other urban centers. The Jews of the capital, when they were not lending to urban artisans, serviced villages within a radius of some 30 kilometers, but concentrated their energies on those located in Valencia's densely populated *horta*.¹²⁵ The radius of action of Alzira's lenders was smaller: less than 20 kilometers.¹²⁶ The moneymen of Morvedre traveled as far as Toga, on the Millars River, some 45 kilometers to the north.¹²⁷ The absence of large Jewish communities in the north encouraged them to broaden the scope of their credit operations. The small communities in Borriana and Vila-real did not establish defined spheres of influence or offer much competition. The Jews of Castelló, also not numerous, were the key lenders north of the Millars

by holding office in *aljama* government. For example, in ACA: C 59: 131r (18 October 1282) Salamó de Torre and Ismael de Tirasona appear along with Samuel Passarell as creditors of the butcher Martí but do not appear again in the sources; in C 138: 160r (29 March 1306) Salamó Avenresch is listed as one of the several creditors of Simó Pardo but does not appear again; and in C 187: 214v (28 April 1326) the creditor Abraham de Leyda (Lleida) makes his first and only documentary appearance. Jucef Minal, an immigrant from Xàtiva, is another example. Though well-connected by virtue of his marriage into Morvedre's powerful Coffe clan, he himself was not personally wealthy. Prior to his arrival in Morvedre, Jucef had obtained a two-year moratorium on the repayment of 300 sous to Christian creditors (ACA: C 186: 21v [11 May 1325]). Later, he described himself as "paupertate coactus" and related how he had been compelled to borrow 200 sous from his father-in-law, Abraham Coffe, who required him to hand over as security some *instrumenta* recording the small sums which he himself had previously loaned to Christians (ACA: C 379: 129v–130r [30 January 1327]).

¹²⁴ García, "De Perpinyá a Elx," 254.

¹²⁵ J. Hinojosa Montalvo, "El préstamo judío en la ciudad de Valencia en la segunda mitad del siglo XIV," *Sefarad*, 45 (1985), 323–325.

¹²⁶ Furió, "Jueus d'Alzira," 143–144.

¹²⁷ ACA: C 373: 203v (7 May 1325).

River, which was roughly the northern boundary of the realm of action of the Jews of Morvedre.¹²⁸ To the west, via the Palancia River valley, their range was more limited, extending as far as Altura, near Sogorb, some 25 kilometers away.¹²⁹ Competition from the capital limited their range of action toward the south even more; though Morvedre's lenders frequented Massamagrell some 15 kilometers away, they more occasionally visited villages closer to Valencia like Montcada and Carpesa.¹³⁰

For the Muslim inhabitants of the seignuries serviced by the Jews, recourse to Jewish credit was not just a matter of economic necessity or enterprise but also a result of their adjustment to new political realities. During the decades immediately following the conquest, Jewish lenders demanding payment of debts would at times have seemed, in the eyes of Muslim peasants, much like Jewish tax collectors and bailiffs, familiar personages of the conquerors' regime. Yet, even if some Muslims experienced indebtedness as a form of dependence, as but another aspect of their subjugation, there is remarkably little evidence of Muslim resistance to or conflict with Jewish creditors from Morvedre. In 1250, when King Jaume confirmed the charter of privileges of the Muslims of Uixó, the latter sought release from all obligations to Jewish creditors.¹³¹ Still, Morvedre's Jewish lenders did not encounter much opposition from Muslim debtors until the 1320s, when the revenue hungry monarchy was squeezing and antagonizing all its subjects. In 1321 the Muslims of Altura attempted to evade Isaac Abenafrit with the claim that the

¹²⁸ On these communities, see Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*; and J.R. Magdalena Nom de Déu, *Judíos y cristianos ante la "Cort del Justícia" de Castellón* (Castelló, 1988) regarding the fifteenth century.

¹²⁹ ACA: C 173: 51r-v (2 May 1321).

¹³⁰ The spheres of the lenders of Morvedre and Valencia overlapped to a certain degree. In cases of debt litigation involving Christian farmers from villages located between El Puig and the capital, Jews from both Morvedre and Valencia sometimes comprised the opposition. The lenders from the two urban centers had not been partners; rather, they just happened to have provided credit to the same set of clients. For example, ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 72 (2 November 1324): Massamagrell; C 187: 123r-v (21 March 1326): Cebolla, near El Puig; C 189: 262r (13 September 1326): Montcada; C 188: 100r-v (22 November 1326): Carpesa and Montcada; and CR Pere III, caixa 27, no. 3713 (9 January 1339): Vinalesa.

¹³¹ Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 324, n. 3; and *Cartes de poblament*, no. 84. The Vall d'Uixó became part of the economic domain of the Jews of Morvedre and would be frequented by Jewish lenders and retailers, but it seems unlikely that they would have made many inroads by 1250, only two years after the *repartiment* in Morvedre.

king had granted them a two-year moratorium on debt payment, and a few years later the *amîn* of Toga refused to cooperate in collecting the debts owed to Mossé Asseyo by local Muslims.¹³² But even these cases were exceptional, especially in light of the much greater resistance of Christian debtors in these years.

Lending and tax collection, or tax farming, were closely related activities. Jewish bailiffs, for whom the collection of royal taxes was the principal duty—or concern, in those cases in which they had “purchased” the bailiate from the crown—could, once they had satisfied the crown, funnel the surplus revenue into credit operations. Jucef Avinçaprut, for instance, counted moneylending among his varied sources of income.¹³³ In addition, bailiffs like Avinçaprut and Salamó Alconstantini took advantage of their familiarity with the crown’s fiscal administration to farm other taxes such as the *herbatge*, the grazing fee collected from stockmen throughout the kingdom. Even a Jew of lesser note, Bonet Çaragoçano, invested in the *herbatge* farm.¹³⁴ At this juncture, before the kingdom’s economy was more fully on a monetary footing, many royal taxes must have been rendered in kind. The *herbatge* certainly was, to the tune of “six out of

¹³² ACA: C 173: 51r–v (2 May 1321) for Altura; and ACA: C 373: 203v (7 May 1325) for Toga. The apparently negligible amount of conflict between Jews and Muslims on credit issues, at least through the reign of Jaume II, is precisely what makes it so difficult to uncover much evidence of Jewish loans to Muslims. The much greater resistance of Christian debtors to Jewish creditors is treated in chap. 4.

¹³³ ACA: C 81: 178r (1 September 1290); C 199: 14r (15 January 1302); and C 141: 227r–v (13 March 1308) all treat the debts of the Bellpuig family, the lords of Torres-Torres, to Jucef. See above at nn. 33–36 for the “purchase” of the bailiate by Avinçaprut and Salamó Alconstantini.

¹³⁴ ACA: C 42: 227r (23 February 1280), and C 59: 143r (28 October 1282) for Bonet Çaragoçano. In 1283 Salamó Alconstantini collected the *herbatge* (ACA: C 62: 22v); and in 1284 he formed a partnership with Jucef and Salamó Avinçaprut to farm this tax (ACA: C 43: 114r [26 January 1285]). It is not clear, from the royal orders of 1282 and 1283 commanding officials to assist Bonet and Salamó “super colligendo erbagio,” whether the Jews were merely collectors or were collecting the tax by virtue of a tax farm. There is no doubt, however, that in 1284 the three Jewish partners were farming the tax. ACA: C 43: 114r: “Salomon Baffiel [Alconstantini], judeus vicinus dicti loci [Morvedre], nobis exposuit quod cum super emptionem erbagii anni proximi transacti, quam dictus Salomon fecerit a nobis, Juceffus Avinxapruh et Salomon Avinxapruh, fratres vicini dicti loci, facti fuissent socii et participes cum ipso in emptione predicta cum carta judaica, ut continetur in ea, de quo quidem erbagio seu societate eiusdem dicti Juceffus et Salomon Avinxapruh receperunt, ut dicitur, duo mille solidos regalium ad que solvenda certo termino eidem Salomoni vel R. [Raymundo] de Rivo Seco seu alteri exigenti pro nobis se obligaverunt cum publico instrumento, ut in eo videbitis contineri.”

every thousand lambs and kids born during a given year.”¹³⁵ Jewish farmers and collectors of taxes consequently had at their disposal produce and livestock which they could lend or sell on credit to Christian and Muslim peasants. Understanding this, Jaume I had thus empowered the Jews of Morvedre not only to extend monetary loans to Christians *ad cotum* but, significantly, to make transactions (*baratas*) with them in bread grain, livestock, oil, esparto grass, and flax.¹³⁶ Still, by the end of the century, if not earlier, the great majority of Jewish loans were in coin.¹³⁷

Although in 1283 Jews were prohibited from serving as bailiffs and collectors of royal taxes, some nonetheless continued to farm royal taxes. The distinction between collecting taxes and farming taxes was subtle, but the fact that Jewish tax farmers “collected” the taxes indirectly, through the offices of the Christian bailiff and his assistants, in contrast to Jewish bailiffs, who overtly and directly exacted the king’s dues, helped to smooth the potentially ruffled feathers of Christians and Muslims. In fact, the very year following the removal of Jewish bailiffs, Salamó Alconstantini and the Avinçaprut brothers farmed the *herbatge*. In 1308 the Jew Vidal Aborrabe joined forces with Berthomeu Seguir, the lieutenant bailiff of Morvedre, to farm crown revenues in the Vall d’Uixó for the hefty sum of 7,200 sous. In both cases evidence of the tax farms has survived due to subsequent litigation between the partners.¹³⁸ Likewise, informa-

¹³⁵ Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 157.

¹³⁶ ACA: C 16: 239v (25 October 1271).

¹³⁷ Y. Assis, *The Jews of Santa Coloma de Queralt: An Economic and Demographic Case Study of a Community at the End of the Thirteenth Century* (Jerusalem, 1988), 75, finds that less than five percent of Jewish loans were in kind in 1293–95; Emery, *Jews of Perpignan*, 66, reaches similar conclusions, as does Furió, “Jueus d’Alzira,” 142, though for the later fourteenth century.

¹³⁸ See n. 134, esp. ACA: C 43: 114r, regarding Alconstantini’s suit against the Avinçapruits for the 2,000 sous allegedly owed him as stipulated in the *carta judaica* recording the terms of their partnership, and C 56: 77r (22 April 1285). ACA: C 289: 81r (5 August 1308): Vidal Aborrabe complains that even though he paid his half of the price of the tax farm to Seguir, the latter will not allow him to collect or relinquish to him his share of the revenue. On 11 December, with decision on the case pending, Jaume II ordered, “Compellendo nichilominus sarracenos dicte vallis detinentes dictos redditus seu eorum partem ad dandum eidem Vitali partem quam sibi de ipsis dare tenentur, prout de foro fuerit faciendum” (ACA: C 143: 22r). C 289: 89v–90r (16 October 1308) suggests that Seguir was a rather shady character, unjustly confiscating, according to the *prohomens* of Morvedre, land from Christians and Muslims in the *terme* and committing other misdeeds. Another example of a tax-farm coming to light because of complications is ACA: C 136: 218v–219r

tion on Jews leasing crown utilities in Morvedre, such as mills, ovens, and presses, comes only from the royal letters and judicial records generated by the infamous wax-press affair of 1326–27.¹³⁹ Unfortunately, the lack of the accounts of the local bailiff prior to 1382 make it impossible to know anything more about Jewish tax farmers in Morvedre in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁴⁰

The Jews of Morvedre also began to farm seigneurial revenues, though the absence of extant accounts from the lordships that they frequented hinders the full substantiation of this assertion. In the fourteenth century the increasing monetarization of seigneurial economies moved lords, especially those possessing larger domains, to farm out rents and monopolies to the highest bidders, much as royal bailiffs auctioned off royal taxes and utilities.¹⁴¹ Affluent Jews who had the capital to invest in loans and in the purchase of land and other property on the seigneuries must have bid to farm their rents as well. Jucef Alorqui was such a lender/tax farmer, representative of the Jews with whom seigneurs had been dealing during the past few decades. In 1348, as he lay on his deathbed intestate, some relatives surreptitiously lifted from his chest “jewelry, debt instruments, and *capbreus*,” that is, booklets in which the renders of taxpayers were recorded.¹⁴²

(13 September 1305), which concerns Aljofar, the daughter and heir of Jucef Alateffi, Jew of Valencia, who had farmed the agrarian rents of Benaguasil for one year. Aljofar, represented by her husband Solahimam Abenabib, was complaining because the Muslims of Benaguasil still had not paid the rents owed to her father.

¹³⁹ See chap. 3 for this matter.

¹⁴⁰ The prominence of local Jews in farming crown revenues in Morvedre in 1382 suggests that they had been pursuing this activity in previous years. Even so, as explained in Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, there is good reason to think that Jewish tax farming increased in the final decades of the fourteenth century and through much of the fifteenth century.

¹⁴¹ E. Guinot Rodríguez, *Feudalismo en expansión en el norte valenciano: Antecedentes y desarrollo del señorío de la Orden de Montesa. Siglos XIII y XIV* (Castellón, 1986), 134–138, 265–269; Furió, *Camperols*, 122–124; and F. Garcia Oliver, *Terra de feudals. El País Valencià en la tardor de l'Edat Mitjana* (Valencia, 1991), 82–83, 119.

¹⁴² ACA: C 649: 185r–v (1 February 1348). The complaint was registered by Jucef Lobell, the great-grandfather of Vengues, Alorqui's daughter, “quod predictus Juceff Alorqui, ad mortem veniens nullo condito testamento, alii coniuncti in linea parentele dicto Juceffo Alorqui, mente deliberata moteque tipo malicie et iniquitatis potius zelo amoris et justice furtive abstraxerunt de quadam caixa dicti Juceffi Alorqui jocalia, instrumenta debitoria et capibrevia dicti defuncti.” More evidence comes from the aftermath of the Castilian war (on which, see chap. 5), when Pere III freed the people of Almenara from all their debts to the Jewish and Christian “rebels” of Morvedre. Pere included the outstanding “agrarian rents” which the “rebels” had been farming in Almenara. ACA: C 1574: 35v (16 May 1366): “de

The retail commerce of Valencian Jews developed in tandem with their wide ranging credit and tax farming operations. By the early fourteenth century, when the kingdom's economy was humming nicely, Jewish peddlers had become sufficiently numerous for royal, municipal, and seigneurial authorities to take note of their movements. In 1318 Jaume II addressed the problem of lodging "foreign," or non-resident Jews. In towns with a Jewish quarter they were to stay with local Jews, though they could store their "merchandise" in the homes, or warehouses, of Christians. In towns lacking a Jewish population, the Christians could take in both merchant and merchandise.¹⁴³ Some lords and municipalities attempted to exact tariffs from Jewish merchants visiting their lands and towns despite the exemptions the monarchs had granted the latter.¹⁴⁴

By the 1320s the highly mobile Jews of Morvedre were regularly traveling as far north as Vila-real with their wares.¹⁴⁵ *Aljama* officials gave considerable attention to the profitable commerce of these retailers when they set up the system of sales-taxes in 1327. Jews who bought cloth, jewelry, and foodstuffs, like figs and honey, for the purpose of resale were to be taxed on the basis of the amount they spent on these items. The merchants were obliged to inform the officials of their purchases within three days. The officials obviously

omnibus et quibuscumque censibus agrariis, debitis, nominibus sive creditis." Jews of Morvedre also farmed seigneurial revenues in the fifteenth century—see Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 3.

¹⁴³ ACA: C 166: 32r-v (14 March 1318). See chap. 2 for Jaume's religious motives for making this provision.

¹⁴⁴ ACA: C 246: 21v-22r (8 May 1320), regarding the Jews' complaint that "barones et milites" and their officials in the southern part of the kingdom ("ultrarium Xucari") were extorting "novum pedagium sive passagium" from Jews trading on their lands; and C 187: 251r-v (9 May 1326), responding to the complaint of Valencian Jewry that officials in Tortosa were making similar unjust exactions. Jewish merchants from Morvedre were more likely to have been affected by official measures in Tortosa.

¹⁴⁵ ACA: C 379: 98r-v (13 January 1327) concerns the fine of 60 sous which the *mustaçaffs* (market inspectors) of Vila-real imposed on "quendam judeum de Muroveteri cum penso falso." They collected the fine in both coin and kind, silk in this case. The local bailiff griped that this was a violation of his jurisdiction over Jews. Another example of Jews of Morvedre retailing far afield is ACA: C 371: 204r-v (8 November 1322), regarding the complaint of Mossé Asseyo, who had been selling his "merchandise" on the lordship of Artana. There, after a Jew from Onda filed suit against him in the seigneurial court, the lord, Ramon de Montcada, jailed and extorted 150 sous from him as the price of redemption.

could not have kept track of the retailers' transactions once they departed Morvedre with their pack-mules in tow.¹⁴⁶

In contrast to their heavy participation in local and regional trade, the Jews of Morvedre played a minimal role in international commerce in the fourteenth century.¹⁴⁷ The one exception was of course the wine trade, which sometimes took them, or their casks, beyond the domestic market.

Among the goods marketed by the itinerant Jewish retailers from Morvedre were the manufactures of the town's Jewish artisans. Unlike the business of the moneylenders, which sparked so much controversy with Christians and consequently attracted so much royal attention, the commonplace labors of the artisans rarely merited mention in the letters issued by the royal chancery. *Aljama* officials, however, were interested in the taxable assets of all community members, no matter how meager.¹⁴⁸ In 1327, when devising the new *cisa* plan, officials focused on those crafts which a substantial number of Jews practiced, which were lucrative, or which could be readily taxed on the basis of piecework. They identified jewelers, who purchased, reworked, and then sold jewelry; silversmiths; and shoemakers, who were obliged to render a tax of 2 diners for each dozen pair of shoes sold. Aware that there were other sorts of artisans, the officials levied a tax on every artisan, whatever his or her craft, of one half-diner for every sous earned. They took care, however, not to threaten the survival of the poorest artisans, exempting from taxation those who earned less than 6 diners per day.¹⁴⁹

The spectrum of crafts practiced in a Jewish community comprising, in 1327, some fifty to sixty households was bound to be limited.

¹⁴⁶ ACA: C 230: 60r–63v. Brokers, too, were taxed: one half-diner per sous of the commissions they earned. The *aljama* continued to levy sales-taxes on such mercantile transactions into the fifteenth century—see the legislation of 1403, for example (ACA: C 2339: 109r–v).

¹⁴⁷ This is evident from the studies of R. Ferrer Navarro, “Los judíos en el comercio valenciano durante el siglo XIV,” in *Primer Congreso de Historia del País Valenciano*, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1980), 2: 553–556; and Hinojosa, “Actividades judías,” 1554–1559.

¹⁴⁸ In describing the fiscal plan established among officials of the Valencian *aljamas* in 1306, the bailiff general noted that the board of *aljama* representatives intended to impose a head-tax on the poor, artisan families lacking taxable assets (ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2678 [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 159]): “E encara ajen poder de tatxar per cabeçes aquells que trobaren nichils segons l’offici o lo mester de que usaran o que guanyar poden.”

¹⁴⁹ ACA: C 230: 60r–63v.

Furthermore, since they were faced with competition from a much larger population of Christian and Muslim artisans, Jewish artisans naturally specialized, occupying a niche or niches in the local and regional economy where friction with craftsmen of other faiths, especially Christian craftsmen, was less likely. In contrast to all the hub-bub occasioned by the Jews' specialization in usury, their specialization in crafts like silverwork evoked minimal comment.

The Jews came to Morvedre prepared to adapt to, and to take advantage of, new and changing circumstances. Their economic adaptation entailed the diversified investment of capital and engaging simultaneously in a number of pursuits. Few Jews were just wine-producers, moneylenders, artisans, tax farmers, or merchants; instead, they might be found practicing any two or three of these occupations, depending on season and opportunity. The Jews who settled in Morvedre in its first century as a Christian town were an industrious and enterprising lot, precisely the sort Jaume the Conqueror and his successors had hoped to attract as they colonized the new kingdom.

As the Jewish community in Morvedre grew and the economic pursuits of its members progressively diversified, individual Jews were party to an ever-widening range of economic transactions with Christians and Muslims. The Jews' dealings with Christians, however, were more frequent and varied and tended to be mutually beneficial, whereas those which both they and the Christians conducted with Muslims smacked more of exploitation. Hence the *cisa* ordinances which *aljama* officials issued in 1327 called for taxing the rents Jewish landlords collected from Christian or Muslim tenants, and the profits Jews earned from their loans to Christians or Muslims, but with regard to the earnings of business associations, *aljama* officials acknowledged only Jewish partnerships with Christians. Such Jewish-Christian *companyes* were so usual that the officials actually forbade Jews to enter into new partnerships with Christians during the term of the levy, lest they invest their money in these associations as a means of hiding their taxable income. Those partnerships already formed remained valid, but the funds Jews had invested were liable to assessment and the Jews could not change Christian partners.¹⁵⁰

Once the *aljama* had established its regime of internally administered sales-taxes, it farmed them out to Christian tax farmers like

¹⁵⁰ ACA: C 230: 60r-63v.

Ferrer Porta, who “purchased” the *cises* levied “on wine, meat, bread and commercial transactions.”¹⁵¹ Other Christians also came to have a financial interest in the growth and economic vitality of the Jewish community. Pedro Martínez de Huesca, concessionaire of the royal wax-press constructed in the *jueria*, desired to cultivate a Jewish clientele and therefore sublet the utility to the Jew or Jews most likely to further this end. When the first sublessee, Bonet Avincanes, proved too aggressive in his sales tactics for Martínez’s liking, Martínez tried to transfer the lease to the allegedly more suitable group of Isaac Maymó, and Mossé and Samuel Passarell. Yet Maymó and the Passarells were the political enemies of Avincanes and had formed a somewhat unsavory alliance with two Christians, Pere Lezina and Pere Babot, who threatened Avincanes and his associates with death and later, in collusion with their Jewish allies, leveled a variety of criminal charges against Avincanes. Lezina and Babot possibly ran a wax-press of their own and preferred cooperation, or friendly competition, with Maymó and the Passarells.¹⁵² Whatever the exact strategies of the parties involved, forms of Jewish-Christian partnership and Christian interest in profiting from Jewish business are evident here. Thus as the Jewish and Christian communities in colonial Morvedre expanded in tandem, each one developing its own institutions and administrative structures, individual Jews and Christians who came there, or who grew up there, realized that subsistence and profit depended to a certain extent on cooperation and association with members of the other community, and even on a knowledge of the other community’s operation and infighting.

Yet growing economic interdependence was not the only or the most decisive factor shaping the relationship between the communities of colonizers. The two communities had been from the start developing along divergent paths. Even in the 1270s, when the power of Jewish bailiffs peaked, there was no real Jewish-Christian condominium. The Muslims recognized that though the most powerful

¹⁵¹ Porta farmed these taxes sometime before 1337. ACA: C 861: 168v–169r (11 February 1337): “Nos . . . cupientes erga utilitatem dicte aliamie [of Morvedre] utilius providere, cum presenti littera nostra concedimus dicte aliamie quod quatuor judei ex majoribus peytariis dicte aliamie possint ponere inter judeos dicte aliamie sisam seu impositionem duplicatam in vino, carnibus, pannis et mercimoniis et aliis eorum, prout in capitulis factis super venditionem quam preterito tempore de simili impositionem fecerunt Ferrario Porta continetur.”

¹⁵² See chap. 3 for a discussion of the political implications of this case.

Jews had the trappings and authority of Christian notables, the Jews were not on an equal footing with the Christians and were at best the auxiliaries or the instruments of the Christian authorities. Therefore when the Muslims repeatedly rebelled, they rebelled against the Christians, not the Jews, for it was the former who had imposed the yoke. There were no outbreaks of collective, intercommunal violence between Muslims and Jews. In fact, the ephemeral reign of the Jewish bailiffs came to an end in 1283 as a result of Christian agitation, not Muslim revolt. All three communities could sense the way the winds were blowing prior to 1283; it became even clearer thereafter. Creating a new kingdom, the Jews learned, involved more than settling towns, controlling conquered peoples, and rebuilding economies.

CHAPTER TWO

PUTTING THE JEWS IN THEIR PLACE

The history of the kingdom of Valencia in its first century is not just a chronicle of the achievements of hardy and ambitious Christian and Jewish pioneers, and of the suffering and failed rebellions of subjugated native Muslims. As Christians and Jews enjoyed the spoils of conquest under the supervision of Christian and Jewish royal officials, as royal armies suppressed one Mudejar revolt after another, and as established and newer immigrants invested their labor and capital in agriculture, industry, commerce, and the construction of bridges, mills, churches, and synagogues, the communities of Christian and Jewish settlers were, in Morvedre and other Valencian towns, working out the details of their own relationship. This relationship was supposed to be hierarchical, with Christians on top and Jews below them. The new kingdom of Valencia was of course a Christian kingdom and part of Latin Christendom, where Jews were expected to occupy positions in the socioreligious order which more accurately reflected the Christians' conception of them as a despised and abject people, dispersed and subjected to others because of their refusal to acknowledge the Messianic status of Jesus. The kingdom, then, could not be a land of limitless opportunity for the Jews. However useful they proved themselves to be to king or to Christian municipality, the Jews existed in Morvedre on royal sufferance and under royal protection. However much the interests of Jewish and Christian immigrants were intertwined by political expediency and economic necessity, the Jews could not deal with the Christians as social equals. Neither Jewish nor Christian settlers could fail to understand this, for almost all had come from the Christian realms of Aragon and Catalonia (and the Jews from Islamic Valencia had, after all, been *dhimmîs*).

Yet despite these common assumptions and expectations, a proper socioreligious order, as Christian ideologues would have it, did not emerge overnight. Like the colonization of the kingdom, its emergence was a gradual process. Indeed, it was partly a function of and a result of successful colonization, for as the numbers and assurance

of the Christian settlers increased, their perception of their Jewish neighbors altered. But also like the colonization process, the establishment of a socioreligious hierarchy in which Jews were in all important respects inferior was neither inexorable nor inevitable. Just as the ultimate success of colonization hinged on the uncertain ability of royal armies when confronted with Muslim insurrection, and on the unforeseeable numbers, energy, and perseverance of Christian immigrants, the subordination of Valencian Jews, including its timing and its varied ramifications, depended on royal politics and on changes in the form and intensity of Christian piety.

The effective subordination of the kingdom's Jews occurred in two noticeable stages. The first stage centered on the dismissal of Jewish bailiffs by King Pere II in 1283, a momentous act in the history of Valencian Jewry. The second stage, encompassing roughly the reign of Jaume II (1291–1327), saw Valencian Christians working with increasing determination to degrade the Jews. The Christians' efforts in this regard resulted from the fuller development among them of a sense of *communitas*, a feeling generated by and articulated through Eucharistic devotion and other forms of religious life. These two facets of the process of Jewish degradation, the political and the religious, were not, however, so neatly distinguishable or consecutive, even if the question of Jewish bailiffs resonated in Pere II's reign and the symbolism of the *Corpus Christi* affected Christians more powerfully during that of Jaume II.

The abrupt removal of the Jewish bailiffs at the end of 1283 was integral to, and a dramatic indicator of, a gradual shift in the relationship between Jews and Christians in Morvedre and environs which had been underway for many years. The Jews and Christians who immigrated to Morvedre were already deeply influenced by notions of their and the other religious community's place in sacred history and in the economy of salvation. Whether they had been acquired through the study of sacred texts or absorbed in the home and in church or synagogue, these religious ideologies shaped the more mundane expectations of each group and erected psychological and even physical barriers between them. Jews and Christians deliberately segregated themselves by settling down in distinct neighborhoods, building and congregating in synagogue or church and town hall, and setting up separate facilities for slaughtering. Once their much smaller community achieved a certain critical mass, the Jews of Morvedre would have felt more self-sufficient and confident

in their interaction with local Christians. From the perspective of the Christians, who were at the same time developing a local identity centered on municipality and parish, the Jewish community increasingly appeared, institutionally and spatially, a distinct entity, one whose presence they took into account when scrutinizing municipal finances or when weighing their town's merits as a Christian community deserving of divine favor.

Fiscal considerations highlighted the distinction between Christian municipality and Jewish *aljama*. As early as 1261 King Jaume I ruled that the Jews could pay royal taxes separately from the Christian community.¹ The *jurats*' acknowledgment that the local Jews would not be paying crown taxes along with the municipality did not, however, cause them to forget the Jews in their fiscal calculations. On the contrary, the king's separation of the *aljama* from the municipality in the area of royal taxation only made the *jurats* more avid, and creative, in their efforts to collect more revenue from the Jews for a variety of specifically local taxes and fees. The attempt of the *jurats* in 1284 to force Jewish proprietors to pay higher irrigation canal maintenance fees than the Christians occasioned the first of many skirmishes between municipality and *aljama*—or at least the first one requiring the king's intervention—that would occur over the course of the Jews' long stay in Morvedre.² The *jurats* no doubt recognized that the *aljama* also paid taxes to the king, but this other corporate body, comprised of Jews after all, proved too tempting a target.

The ritual and social life of the parish shaped Christian views of and behavior toward the Jews more powerfully than the business of municipal government.³ Attendance at mass and participation in the celebrations of the liturgical year forged and reinforced the bonds of community among Christians while necessarily excluding the Jews. The understanding of sacred history which Christians thus acquired marked the Jews not only as different and misguided but possibly as malevolent as well.

¹ ACA: C 11: 202v (13 April 1261) [Burns, *Diplomatarium*, 2: no. 366].

² ACA: C 46: 208r (13 June 1284).

³ On the function of the parish, see R.I. Burns, "The Parish as a Frontier Institution in Thirteenth-Century Valencia," *Speculum*, 41 (1966), 244–251; *idem*, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 54–59, 118–123; more generally, S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1997), 79–100; and J. Bossy, "The Mass as A Social Institution 1200–1700," *Past and Present*, 100 (1983), 29–61.

The first few decades of Jewish and Christian settlement in Morvedre coincided, moreover, with the missionizing campaigns of the Dominicans and Franciscans. In 1243 and again in 1263 Jaume I commanded officials throughout his realms to compel Jews and Muslims to attend mendicant sermons. His son Pere, stimulated by the bull of Pope Nicholas III ordering preaching to all the Jews of western Christendom, issued similar instructions to his officials in 1279.⁴ There is no direct evidence that the friars preached to the Jews and Muslims of Morvedre on these or other occasions. Pere's letters prohibiting Christian crowds from entering the synagogues with the preachers and calling on the Dominicans and Franciscans themselves to cease their threats and violence against the Jews were directed to a number of places in Aragon and Catalonia, and to Valencia and Xàtiva in the kingdom of Valencia. The king did not, however, have a letter sent to Morvedre in particular, probably because there was not yet a mendicant house there.⁵ Still, the Jewish community in Morvedre, one of the three largest in the kingdom, would not have completely escaped the mendicants' attentions. Precisely because there were Dominican and Franciscan houses in the capital, whence the friars could easily have made proselytizing forays to nearby Morvedre, the king deemed it sufficient to issue orders to its civil and ecclesiastical officials. The presence of baptized Muslims in Morvedre by 1281 suggests that the mendicants had previously preached in the town.⁶ The *jurats'* invitation to the Franciscans to establish a convent in Morvedre in 1295 also implies that local Christians had prior experience of the friars.⁷

⁴ For mendicant missionizing among the Jews, see Baer, *History*, 1: 150–162, 166–170; R. Chazan, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989), 38–48; J. Riera i Sans, “Les llicències reials per predicar als jueus i als sarraïns (Segles XIII–XIV),” *Calls*, 2 (1987), 114–118; Assis, *Golden Age*, 50–54; and J.R. Webster, *Els Menorets: The Franciscans in the Realms of Aragon From St. Francis to the Black Death* (Toronto, 1993), 130–136. The case of the Muslims in particular is treated by R.I. Burns, “Journey from Islam: Incipient Cultural Transition in the Conquered Kingdom of Valencia (1240–1280),” *Speculum*, 35 (1960), 337–356; and *idem*, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 80–108.

⁵ Pere's three letters, all dated 8 October 1279, are in ACA: C 42: 148v–149v; the first of these, 148v, is partially transcribed by Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 315, n. 9.

⁶ ACA: C 49: 64r (1 April 1281), and see chap. 1. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 198–207, treats the Dominican and Franciscan establishments in the kingdom.

⁷ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 202; Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 251–252; and Webster, *Els Menorets*, 61.

The efforts of the mendicants to bring both Muslims and Jews into the Christian fold emphasized the fact that both stood outside of the church and that both were somehow aligned against the Christian community. The friars' minimal success in persuading the Jews of the Crown of Aragon of the alleged truth of Christianity only exacerbated the Christians' frustration with the Jews' willful blindness.⁸ In the kingdom of Valencia Jewish resolve contrasted with the conversion of a good number of subjugated and demoralized Muslims.⁹ Any feelings harbored by the Christians of Morvedre that the local Jews were, like the Muslims, fundamentally and dangerously dissident and that they were, even more than the Muslims, unnaturally stubborn existed in irreducible tension with their need to collaborate with the Jews and Jewish officials in the colonization of the town. The resultant stress produced fissures in the façade of normally placid Christian-Jewish interchange, through which underlying Christian hostility or fear occasionally escaped.

Monarchs discerned the potentiality for violent outbursts against the Jews when unusually difficult economic and political conditions, or natural disasters, afflicted their Christian subjects. After earthquakes shook the Valencian territories, King Pere enjoined officials to protect Jews throughout the kingdom from harm and to respond to the complaints of Jews whom Christians might have injured.¹⁰

The king did not, however, issue similar orders on behalf of the Muslims. He did not need to. In their fantasies of Jewish and Muslim malevolence, Christians imagined that Jews and Muslims would manifest and act on their hostility against Christians and Christianity differently. Christian misgivings about the Mudejars related largely to matters of political security and grew out of very real political conditions. They feared that the Mudejars would revolt, or conspire with the kingdom's Muslim enemies in Granada and the Maghrib, or kidnap Christians and sell them into slavery abroad. On the other hand, the Christians' supposition that the Jews bore them ill will derived not from recent history or current events but from their role

⁸ Chazan, *Daggers of Faith*, 179–181.

⁹ Burns, "Journey from Islam," 345–350.

¹⁰ ACA: C 46: 152r (11 January 1284): "Mandamus vobis quatenus manuteneatis et deffendatis in jure tam generaliter quam specialiter omnes judeos civitatis et regni Valencie cum omnibus rebus et bonis eorum ne occasione presentium motuum terre Valencie possint ab aliquo vel aliquibus agravari ac indebite molestari, ipsis facientibus querelantibus de se justicie complementum."

in Christian sacred history as the sinister rejecters and killers of Christ. Once this notion was fixed, and liturgically reinforced each year, panic stricken Christians might deem the Jews responsible for any inexplicable disaster they suffered. The Christians' eyes and political common sense told them that the Jews had neither the numbers nor the foreign allies to make them a political threat; but zealous friars and the Easter liturgy intimated to them that the Jews were malignant and might seek some secret, perhaps supernatural, means of harming them.

Easter season was an especially stressful time because the liturgical re-enactment of Christ's Passion that Christians witnessed depicted Christianity and Judaism as eternally polarized and so dramatically challenged their economic and political cooperation with the Jews. The welter of contradictory emotions thus evoked sometimes engendered violent acts. On 24 March 1283 Prince Alfons seconded the recent orders of his father to officials in Morvedre, Valencia, and Xàtiva that they not permit Christians to stone the Jews during Holy Week.¹¹ Holy Week violence was by no means unprecedented in the lands of the Crown of Aragon, and although this is the first reference to such activity in Morvedre, there is no reason to think that a rock had never before been hurled or an insult shouted at the town's Jews.¹² If some form of verbal or physical violence against the Jews was an annual Easter ritual among Morvedre's Christians, then it could have had an integrative function, discharging Christian rancor in controlled fashion at this most sacred and sensitive moment and thereby maintaining the socioreligious order.¹³ Yet, if such were the case, it is still not clear why King Pere and Prince Alfons chose

¹¹ ACA: C 60: 65v (24 March 1283), addressed to the bailiff and justice of Valencia: "dominus Rex pater noster mandavit vobis per litteras suas quod judeos non permetteretis lapidari per aliquos die veneris sancte, passionis domini nostri et diebus festivitatum pasce. . . ." C 60: 65v also contains instructions that letters be sent to Morvedre, Xàtiva, and towns in Aragon and Catalonia.

¹² Holy Week violence was already taking place in Xàtiva by 1268 and was serious enough to evoke complaints from the Jewish community. See ACA: C 15: 95v (25 April 1268) for the king's response, and the summary of the letter by Assis, *Golden Age*, 29.

¹³ For the interpretation of Holy Week violence as ritual, see Toaff, *Love, Work, and Death*, 179–186; and the brilliant analysis of D. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1996), 200–230, and 203–204 for references to other instances of Holy Week violence in Crown lands in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

to make it an issue in 1283—and not just in the three Valencian towns but also in ten Catalan and fifteen Aragonese localities.

Holy Week violence in the Crown of Aragon had not become, in the years immediately preceding 1283, especially destructive; nor had Easter observances occasioned Christian attempts to eliminate the Jews in their midst.¹⁴ In Morvedre, the Christians had never questioned the presence of the Jews. More problematic than Jewish existence for the Christians of Morvedre and environs was the status of the Jews in Valencian society. Royal laws and privileges, which the inhabitants of the new kingdom so greatly prized, and the teachings of the church, of which most Christians were somewhat apprised, left little doubt that Jews and their religion, while tolerated in Christian society, were to keep a low profile and be subject to the true faith and its adherents. King Jaume I's legislation on the Jews in fact derived largely from the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council. Hence the *Furs* prohibited Jews and Muslims from owning Christian slaves, employing Christian servants and wet nurses, and laboring openly on Christian feast days.¹⁵ Most importantly in the Valencian context, the *Furs* barred Jews and Muslims from the office of bailiff and other public posts.¹⁶ The Holy Week violence that King Pere and Prince Alfons managed to pre-empt in 1283 was meant to be, at least in part, an orchestrated expression of popular outrage at the monarchy's flouting of this prohibition.

The End of Jewish Officialdom

The persistent appointment of Jews to posts in the royal government was the most egregious violation of royal laws and promises and of

¹⁴ Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 203, suggests that King Pere was upset by Holy Week violence in Girona in 1278 because it had caused property damage. Yet neither for 1278 nor for any other year prior to 1283 is there evidence that especially murderous or destructive Holy Week violence was a widespread problem demanding action on the part of royal authorities.

¹⁵ *Furs*, 2: 81–82, Llibre I. Rúbrica VIII. I–II. Regarding the legislation of Lateran IV, see, *inter alia*, S. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1966); E.A. Synan, *The Popes and the Jews in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1965), 103–106, 232–236; S. Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See and the Jews. History* (Toronto, 1991), 18, 21, 132, 134–136, 149–150, 152, 156, 181–183, 191–194; and Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 38–40.

¹⁶ *Furs*, 1: 217–218, Llibre I. Rúbrica III. LXXXIII.

church doctrine. It troubled Christian settlers of the new kingdom of Valencia almost from the start. Only six years after completing the conquest of the kingdom, King Jaume conceded to the settlers, apparently in response to their complaint, "that never again can any Jew be a bailiff . . . or judge in all the kingdom of Valencia, nor hold or have any public office or any jurisdiction."¹⁷ Yet Jaume and especially his son Pere continued to appoint and use Jewish administrators throughout their realms. Jewish bailiffs, as has been seen, appeared in Morvedre in the final years of Jaume's reign and in the first five years of Pere's.

The problem came to a head in 1283, a year of great political uncertainty for King Pere. Pere's conquest of Sicily late in 1282 moved Pope Martin IV, the overlord of Sicily, to depose him formally and to encourage Philippe III of France to invade the Crown of Aragon. At the same time, Pere's domestic enemies, especially the Aragonese nobility, were mobilizing against him. The embattled king, who in March was still in Italy, was anxious that Christians throughout his realms would make the coming Holy Week (12–18 April) the occasion for vociferous and violent protest against his use of Jewish bailiffs and officials. He feared that his Christian subjects would seize the sacred moment to stone and otherwise humiliate the Jews in order to remind him that he had dangerously and impiously raised the Jews above their station. Thus, just a few weeks before Easter, the king and Prince Alfons made a special point of instructing royal officials in Valencia, Aragon, and Catalonia to prevent Christians from stoning Jews. Of the ten Catalan towns to which they directed their letters, at least two had known Jewish bailiffs; of the fifteen Aragonese towns, at least ten; and of the three Valencian towns—Valencia, Morvedre, and Xàtiva—all of them.¹⁸ Probably all had had some experience of Jewish officials or tax collectors. In the spring of 1283 King Pere was still in a position to forestall or repudiate the Easter remonstrations of his Christian subjects. In the fall the Aragonese Union and the townspeople of Valencia and Catalonia would make him listen.

¹⁷ *Aureum opus regalium privilegiorum civitatis et regni Valentie*, ed. L. Alanya (Valencia, 1515; facsimile ed., 1972), 14r, XLI (28 November 1251); and Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 290–291, for a translation and discussion of this document.

¹⁸ Here I base my comments on the evidence collected in Romano, *Judíos al servicio*.

The issue of Jewish officials was only one, and by no means the most important, of several intensifying the conflict between King Pere and the ruling classes of the Crown of Aragon. The rebellious Aragonese nobles who formed the Union, which many Aragonese towns soon joined, greatly resented the fact that Pere had not consulted them before undertaking the expedition to Sicily. To them this was yet another demonstration of Pere's propensity to disregard their privileges and fiscal exemptions while encroaching on their authority. Taking advantage of the international ramifications of Pere's occupation of Sicily, the Union compelled the king, on 3 October 1283, to confirm the *Privilegio General*, a list of its demands. Of the thirty-one articles in the *Privilegio* only one concerned Jewish bailiffs; the rest were aimed at confirming the *Fuero* of the Aragonese, consolidating noble privileges and authority, limiting the nobles' military obligations to the king, restricting royal taxation, and ensuring royal consultation with the estates of Aragon on important matters.¹⁹

In making its demands, the Aragonese Union claimed to be speaking not just for the nobles, knights, and citizens of the kingdom of Aragon, and the Aragonese territories of Ribagorça and Teruel, but for those of the kingdom of Valencia as well. The article of the *Privilegio* concerning Jewish bailiffs thus stated: "the magnates and all the aforesaid others demand that neither in the kingdoms of Aragon and of Valencia, nor in Ribagorça nor Teruel, should there be a bailiff who is a Jew."²⁰ Aragonese nobles had in fact played an important role in the conquest of the kingdom of Valencia and many had acquired land and lordships there. They tended to view the Valencian territories as an appendage of the kingdom of Aragon. Prominent among their goals therefore was the extension of the *Fuero* of Aragon throughout the kingdom of Valencia, or at the very least the confirmation of the *Fuero*'s jurisdiction within their own seigneuries and over Aragonese residents of the kingdom. The Aragonese lords also wished to see the kingdom carved up into lordships and fiefs

¹⁹ L. González Antón, *Las Uniones aragonesas y las Cortes del Reino (1283-1301)*, 2 vols. (Zaragoza, 1975), especially 1: 41-86. For a more summary account, see E. Sarasa Sánchez, *Sociedad y conflictos sociales en Aragón: siglos XIII-XV. (Estructuras de poder y conflictos de clase)* (Madrid, 1981), 33-52.

²⁰ González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 2: 14-19, for the transcription of the *Privilegio General*. Article 26 (17-18) concerns Jewish bailiffs: "demandamos [sic] ricos omnes e todos los otros sobredichos que en los rregnos de Aragon e de Valençia ni en Ribagorça ni en Teruel que non aya y bayle que judio sea."

for themselves and their retainers. In order to achieve their aims in the kingdom of Valencia, the nobles of the Union obtained royal confirmation of another document appended to the *Privilegio General*. Listing their prerogatives and pretensions, this document amounted to “a *Privilegio General* for the Aragonese of the Valencian kingdom.”²¹ Its first article asserted “that the king establishes in the land a Jewish bailiff, whom he ought not to place there, according to the custom of the kingdom.”²² This article did not exactly require the king to remove all Jewish bailiffs, but it nonetheless indicates that Jewish bailiffs were a specific grievance of Aragonese lords in the kingdom of Valencia. Its location at the top of the list of thirty articles was not fortuitous.

Not all Christians in the kingdom of Valencia, however, had the same aims as the Aragonese Union. Indeed, as King Pere well knew, the great majority of the townspeople, mostly Catalan in origin, did not. Pere astutely used the Valencian towns to counter the pretensions of the Aragonese nobles in Valencia. He moved quickly and on 1 December, less than two months after submitting to the demands of the Union, he won the support of the urban citizens by confirming the *Furs* of Valencia and by making them additional concessions in the *Privilegium Magnum*. These measures confirmed the status of the kingdom of Valencia as a distinct political entity within the confederation of the Crown of Aragon and lent the towns greater weight in the balance of the kingdom’s political forces.²³

Yet, even though the Valencian towns did not share the goals of the Aragonese lords in the kingdom of Valencia, they did agree with them on at least one point: there should be no Jewish bailiffs in the kingdom. Hence among King Pere’s concessions in the *Privilegium Magnum* was the following statute, later included in the *Furs*: “we

²¹ González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 1: 87–101, and 93 for the quote. See also the useful account of A. Furió, *Història del País Valencià* (Valencia, 1995), 70–74.

²² González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 2: 23–28, for the transcription of the *Confirmación General de los Fueros de los Aragoneses en Valencia*. Article 1 (24) concerns Jewish bailiffs: “Primerament que el seynor Rey mete judio bayle en la tierra, que non lo deve meter, segund costumpne del rregno.”

²³ González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 1: 96–101; and Furió, *Història*, 73–74. For the text of the *Privilegium Magnum* and other privileges granted or confirmed by King Pere on 1 December 1283, see *Aureum opus*, 29v–35r. Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 230, citing now lost documents from Sagunto’s municipal archive, points out that in 1283 the king also confirmed all royal privileges previously granted to Morvedre and made further concessions concerning the government of the town.

order that no Jew can be a bailiff, or hold a bailiate or a judgeship, or even be a collector of taxes in Valencia or in any other place in the kingdom; nor can a Jew hold public office from which he could have jurisdiction over a Christian."²⁴ In January 1284 Pere made a similar concession to the Catalans, nobility and urban citizenry, as part of a successful effort to secure their support against his foreign and domestic enemies.²⁵

Regarding the issue of Jewish officials, especially Jewish bailiffs, there was a striking unanimity among the Christians of the Crown of Aragon who had any voice in political affairs, and this despite their varied and often divergent political and socioeconomic interests. This widespread opposition to the king's appointment of Jewish bailiffs cannot, then, be reduced to a seigneurial reaction to the use of Jews by King Pere and his father as the main agents in the formation of a centralized administration inimical to noble power.²⁶ Jews, in any case, constituted only a minority of royal officials; most officials in Valencia and the crown's other realms were Christian. Still, even if few in number, Jewish bailiffs were loyal to the king, and, by virtue of their religious identity, conspicuous.²⁷ An examination of the activities of Jewish bailiffs in Morvedre will shed more light on their role in the politicking between crown, nobility, and towns in the kingdom of Valencia, and on why seigneurs and urban folk alike desired their dismissal.

Because of their distinct social origins and political ambitions, the Aragonese nobles and knights possessing lordships near Morvedre and the citizens of the town, most of whom were Catalan in origin,

²⁴ *Aureum opus*, 32v: "Item statuimus et ordinamus quod nullus judeus sit baiulus, nec teneat nec curiam, nec sit etiam collector reddituum in Valencia nec in aliquo loco regni, nec officium publicum teneat unde super christianum habeat jurisdictionem." *Furs*, 1: 218, Llibre I. Rúbrica III. LXXXV.

²⁵ Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 177.

²⁶ The thesis that between 1265 and 1283 the Catalan-Aragonese monarchs attempted to form an "extra-constitutional" system of government independent of the nobility, with Jews as the main instruments for forging this system, is that of J.L. Shneidman, "Jews as Royal Bailiffs in Thirteenth Century Aragon," *Historia Judaica*, 19 (1957), 55-66; and *idem*, "Jews in the Royal Administration of Thirteenth Century Aragon," *Historia Judaica*, 21 (1959), 37-52. It is largely accepted by Assis, *Golden Age*, 13-14.

²⁷ Romano, *Judíos al servicio*, 217-218, argues that Shneidman exaggerates the Jews' role in the royal administration, but agrees with Baer, *History*, 1: 166, that the Jews were a small but conspicuous minority among King Pere's officials. Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 273, 291; and *idem*, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 133, for the kingdom of Valencia.

viewed the activities of Morvedre's Jewish bailiffs from different perspectives.²⁸ For the lords in the countryside the bailiffs were first and foremost representatives of the king whose authority they wished to curb and whose demands they preferred to ignore. King Pere was certainly more authoritarian than his father had been and more inclined to vindicate royal prerogatives.²⁹ Aragonese lords in the kingdom of Valencia immediately felt his heavy hand. The list of demands they presented the king in October 1283 indicates that he had, during the previous six years, exacted from them and their vassals a variety of taxes as well as military service.

The long arm of the king had been reaching out in particular from Morvedre. In March 1277, while in the thick of the fight with the Muslim rebels, Pere instructed local bailiffs and justices to send him lists of the names of knights possessing properties in the districts of their towns, and to summon these same knights to serve him "in defense of the kingdom of Valencia."³⁰ When Jucef Avinçaprut issued the call to arms, however, not all knights of the *terme* of Morvedre mounted their chargers. Among the disobedient were the heirs of Ferrando Juaynes and Pero Núñez, to whom King Jaume had granted the *alqueria* of Canet and other properties around Morvedre in the expectation of receiving military service and fiscal contributions in return. At a moment when he needed all the men he could muster, King Pere found such dereliction to be intolerable. Hence in November 1277, less than two months after subduing the rebels at Montesa, he instructed Avinçaprut to confiscate

²⁸ One should not exaggerate the dichotomy between Aragonese lords and Catalan citizenry. Ferrer, *Conquista y repoblación*, 288–296, shows that among the Christian settlers of the "Camp de Morvedre" whose origins are recorded in the *Llibre del Repartiment* twenty-four were Catalan and nineteen were Aragonese. (The origins of seventy-four, however, are unknown.) Furthermore, not all the lords in the region were Aragonese. Nevertheless, as will be seen regarding the seignorial reaction to the monarchy's use of Jewish bailiffs in Morvedre and other towns in the kingdom, the Aragonese identity of many lords was indeed crucial.

²⁹ King Jaume, in general, tended to treat the nobility in his realms more leniently. In any case, Salamó de la Cavalleria and Muça de Portella, the bailiffs serving Jaume in Morvedre from 1274 until his death in July 1276, seem not to have taken any actions the lords would have regarded as prejudicial to their interests.

³⁰ ACA: C 22: 2r. Among the knights whom the bailiff and justice of Morvedre, on 25 March 1277, "citaverant in deffensionem Regni Valencie" were Gonzalvo López de Pomar, Bertran de Bellpuig, Eximen Zapata d'Alfaro, Bonafonat de Vallebrera, and "los cavalers de Canet."

Canet from the heirs of Juaynes and Núñez.³¹ At the same time, the king rewarded loyal servants, and thus promised Canet, "which we believe belongs to us by right," to Avinçaprut, once the bailiff had taken control of the hamlet and its revenues.³² A short time later Pere also recompensed Aaron Abinafia for his services in the form of tax exemptions for Aaron's tenants on the *alqueries* of Benavites, Gàtova, and Marines, all located within or near Morvedre's *terme*.³³ In just a few months the power of the king and his reliable Jewish officials increased in the region of the lower Palancia, while his recalcitrant Aragonese vassals were dispossessed.

King Pere was determined to get his due from his subjects. Hence he had to know who held property from the crown and precisely what they owed it in return. In 1277 and 1278 the bailiffs Jucef Avinçaprut and Salamó Alconstantini conducted official investigations to ascertain whether proprietors had legitimate titles to their lands and, if so, under what conditions the land had been granted.³⁴ Orders sent to Jucef Avinçaprut in 1280 reveal toward what end Pere intended to put the information thus compiled. Avinçaprut was

³¹ ACA: C 22: 76r (4 November 1277): "Fideli suo Jucefo Avinceprut, baiulo Muriveteris. Salutem et gratiam. Cum alqueria[m] de Caynete, que fuit Petri Nuniz et Ferandi luaynes quondam, possimus emparare ratione defectus servitii quem heredes ipsorum, pro ipsa et aliis possessionibus quas habent in Muroveteri, debebant facere domino regi patri nostro et nobis, super quo moniti fuerunt per ipsum dominum patrem nostrum et nos, et noluerunt venire ad serviendum nobis pro ipsis, et etiam quia aliqua jura nostra eidem patri nostro et nobis negaverunt et subtraxerunt de quibus volumus certificari. Mandamus vobis quatenus, visis presentibus, predictam alqueriam et omnes possessiones quas habent heredes ipsorum in Muroveteri emparetis pro nobis ea ut de jure nostro certificari possimus et emparata teneatis et fructus recipiatis et censualia et alia jura quaque a nobis aliud habeatis mandatum." Nor was King Pere finished with the recalcitrants. On 3 April 1278 (ACA: C 40: 81r) he commanded the bailiffs and justices of Castelló and Morvedre to send him again lists of the names of the knights they had summoned the previous year.

³² ACA: C 22: 76r (4 November 1277). See chap. 1, n. 44, for the transcription.

³³ ACA: C 44: 186v (1 March 1278) [Romano, *Judios al servicio*, 231, no. 11].

³⁴ ACA: C 22: 76r (4 November 1277): "Fidelibus suis Petro Ximino, justicie, et Jucefo Avinceprut, baiulo Muriveteris. Salutem et gratiam. Mandamus vobis quatenus in omnibus inquisitionibus quas per vos mandavimus fieri in Muroveteri per alias literas nostras procedatis in ipsis quas de jure poteritis procedere, et miramur quia in ipsis nondum procesistis." Pere was clearly impatient with Avinçaprut and the justice for not having acted more promptly. ACA: C 40: 81v (2 April 1278) is the order to Alconstantini. According to it, the bailiff was also to confiscate the property deeds, or *instrumenta*, in question, and keep them until the holders of the property provided assurances that they would fulfill their obligations to the crown.

to demand that Guillem Pérez de Cardonet pay the 4,000 sous he owed the king for his *alqueria* of Benialforna in the adjacent Vall de Segó. For the last four years Pérez de Cardonet had not been rendering the obligatory 1,000-sous annual payment; if he did not settle accounts with the king now, the bailiff would expropriate the hamlet.³⁵

The exacting monarch did not shrink from directing his Jewish bailiff to pressure religious orders. The Mercedarian Order faced the prospect of having to relinquish the village of Algar to Avinçaprut if the brothers did not show the bailiff the deed which had made them Algar's landlords. The noble confrere Ramon de Morell had bequeathed Algar to the Order decades ago, and Pere wanted Avinçaprut to verify his rights to certain "services" from the current holders of Algar which Morell had originally owed King Jaume.³⁶ After the relative clemency of Jaume, Pere's deliberate assertion of royal prerogatives through inquest disturbed many landlords. The Aragonese nobles and knights thus objected to such royal investigations in their petition of 1283.³⁷

Behind the bulwark of their *Fuero*, Aragonese seigneurs thought that they and the peasants on their Valencian estates were safe from the king's tax collectors. Yet, judging again from their subsequent complaints, collectors of the *herbatge*, *peatge*, *monedatge*, and *besant* managed to breach their defenses. Jews from Morvedre were instrumental here as well. One of Jucef Avinçaprut's duties as bailiff was to collect the transit duty from all persons transporting their grain and wine

³⁵ ACA: C 48: 165v (15 October 1280): "In alia litera quod exigat et recipiat IIII mille solidos regalium quos Cardonetus dare tenetur domino Regi pro hereditate vallis de Segon, videlicet mille solidos quolibet anno, alias quod emparet sibi bona sua." Avinçaprut must have pressured Pérez de Cardonet to render the sums he owed the crown, for in 1289 he was still in possession of the *alqueria*. See ACA: C 80: 18v and 101r, where the *alqueria* is identified.

³⁶ ACA: C 48: 165v (15 October 1280): "Juceffo Avinzappruch, quod assignet terminum tenentibus locum de Algar infra quod hostendant ei cartam donationis dicti loci, cum non compleverint conditiones servitium quas dominus Rex Jacobus sibi retinuit in dicta donatione, alias quod ex tunc emparet dictum locum." J.W. Brodman, *Ransoming Captives in Crusader Spain: The Order of Merced on the Christian-Islamic Frontier* (Philadelphia, 1986), 79–80, for Ramon de Morell's grant of the villages of Algar and Arguines to the Mercedarians. Avinçaprut had already attempted to collect various taxes from the Muslim inhabitants of Algar, on which see chap. 1.

³⁷ González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 2: 20 (article 14 of the *Reclamaciones generales de los Aragoneses del Reino de Valencia*): "[I]tem el fuero de la enquisicion, que non se deve fer, e se faze, que non se faga."

through Morvedre, including, presumably, the tenants of Aragonese lords marketing their produce.³⁸ Bonet Çaragoçano of Morvedre, collector of the grazing fee for the entire kingdom in 1280, took securities toward payment of the tax from tenants of Alcatén, whose lord was the future *unionista* Jimeno de Orea the Elder.³⁹ Pressure from Morvedre's Jewish bailiffs was at least partly responsible for pushing another Aragonese seigneur, Gonzalvo López de Pomar, into the arms of the Union. In 1279 López protested that Avinçaprut, or one of his Jewish predecessors, had required his Muslim vassals in Albalat to pay the *besant* tax. He first offered the specious argument that Albalat did not belong to the *terme* of Morvedre; the next year he returned with the claim that the bailiff had collected the *besant* retroactively and "not at the time when [he] should have." The king ordered Avinçaprut to desist until further notification. Even if Pere did not doubt his right to the *besant*, he probably wondered whether retroactive collection was too provocative.⁴⁰ Whatever Pere

³⁸ González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 2: 20 (*Reclamaciones generales de los Aragoneses del Reino de Valencia*), articles 10–13, for the complaints of the Aragonese lords about these taxes. ACA: C 49: 64r (1 April 1281) concerns Avinçaprut's collection of the *peatge*.

³⁹ ACA: C 42: 7r (22 February 1280), and 227r (23 February), which is a letter to Bonet ordering him to return the *pignora* he had confiscated "a dictis hominibus ratione erbagii" to the local castellan. The castellan later had to return the securities, or their monetary equivalent, to Bonet. González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 2: 37–49, for the text of the oath and ordinances of the Union, which includes the properties pledged by its members against their violation of the oath. Among them (42) was "dompnus Eximius de Orea, mayor, pono et mito in tenencia et in rrahenas castrum et villam meam de Alcaten, situm in regno Valencie." As farmer of the *herbatge* tax in the kingdom of Valencia in 1283, Salamó Alconstantini went so far as to demand payment of the tax from men of the bailiie of Cantavieja and Castellote, in the kingdom of Aragon. In 1285 Alconstantini was still urging the lieutenant procurator of the kingdom of Valencia to compel these men to pay. King Pere ruled that Alconstantini should make his case before the *Justicia* of Aragon if he had any complaint. See ACA: C 57: 176v (3 August 1285).

⁴⁰ ACA: C 42: 188v (12 December 1279): "Petro Marzen, justicie Muriveteris. Intelleximus quod baiulus noster de Muroveteri exigit pro nobis a sarracenis de Albalat bisancium. Unde cum intelleximus quod castrum de Albalat non est de termino Muriveteris vel Segorbii vel alterius loci quod habet terminum per se, mandamus vobis quatenus inquiratis veritatem si dictum castrum de Albalat habet terminum per se et non sit de termino alicuius loci, et quicquid super predictis inveneritis nobis transmittatis in scriptis sub nostri sigilli munimine interclosam."). Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 324–325, n. 5, transcribes and discusses King Pere's letter to Jucef Avinçaprut in response to López's second complaint (ACA: C 48: 159r [24 September 1280]). González, *Uniones aragonesas*, 2: 43, where Gonzalvo López de Pomar appears among those Aragonese lords pledging their property as security against breaking their oath to the Union: "Eodem modo ego, Gondicalvus Luppi de Pomar, pono ac mito in tenencia et in rrahenas castrum meum et villam de Albalat."

later decided, it ultimately was not enough to pacify López. The Union membership of lords like Jimeno de Orea and Gonzalvo López de Pomar shows that the Union's petition against the king's appointment of Jewish bailiffs in the kingdom of Valencia was founded on a series of personal grievances. It was no small issue.

The Christian inhabitants of Morvedre probably did not shed any tears for rural lords, and may well have applauded when Jewish bailiffs, acting on the king's behalf, dispossessed or taxed them.⁴¹ Yet, even as they and the other townsfolk in the kingdom supported King Pere against the Aragonese lords, they too called for the dismissal of Jewish bailiffs at the end of 1283. The failure of both King Jaume and King Pere to fulfill Jaume's promise of 1251 not to appoint Jewish bailiffs was certainly glaring, but until the Aragonese Union backed Pere into a corner, the towns had lacked the leverage to force the issue. Furthermore, until at least the fall of 1277, when the Mudejar rebels were finally subdued, Christian settlers had often been too preoccupied with their own security to complain in a concerted manner about a rough-and-ready colonial administration with its Jewish staff.

Christians living in Morvedre had considerably more contact with Jewish bailiffs than did the lords of villages in the countryside. Even so, the reasons for the former's dissatisfaction with the bailiffs are less apparent. The primary source of potential conflict between the bailiffs and the townsfolk were the inquests into property rights and fiscal responsibilities that the bailiffs conducted. When seeking revenue and asserting royal rights, King Pere did not treat the towns more gingerly than the nobility, especially not before 1283, when the towns had less political leverage. Between November 1277 and May 1281 Pere issued a series of orders to his Jewish bailiffs in Morvedre directing them to investigate, among other things, whether persons holding rental properties and garden plots in the town pos-

⁴¹ Some twenty years after the removal of Jewish bailiffs, residents and officials of Morvedre were still clashing with some of the very lords whom the Jewish bailiffs had antagonized. ACA: C 137: 11r (26 October 1305) and 81r-v (4 January 1306) treat boundary disputes with Urraca, widow of Gonzalvo López de Pomar and lord of Albalat. C 138: 232v (28 May 1306) addresses the complaints of the Order of Merced, the lord of Algar, that the people of Morvedre were taking irrigation water from its Muslim vassals, and that the bailiff of Morvedre was unjustly arresting its vassals for alleged infractions.

sessed legitimate titles for them. Those without the proper deed were to lose their properties.⁴² At a time when the land market was open and active, and when squatting and the expropriation of Muslim farmers was not uncommon, such official investigations worried and angered townspeople hoping for advancement in the new kingdom. Hence in 1283 the “citizens and settlers of the city and kingdom of Valencia” wrested from the king confirmation of their rights to whatever properties they were then holding “with title and without title, with charters and without charters.”⁴³ In Morvedre there would be no more Jewish bailiffs and no further investigations.

Both nobles and townspeople had evident political and economic motives for demanding the deposition of Jewish bailiffs. The nobles sought to redress the balance of power between themselves and a monarch who, in their view, was overweening, and both they and the urban folk wanted relief or exemption from the king’s growing fiscal demands. The ouster of Jewish bailiffs, the efficient and loyal agents of an aggressive and exacting monarch, would help to achieve these aims. Still, the king had Christian bailiffs and other Christian officials who challenged aristocratic authority and collected royal taxes. Nonetheless, all the parties concerned made a special issue of Jewish bailiffs, not of the office of bailiff *per se*. They did so not because the Jewish bailiffs were particularly capable royal servants—for there is no reason to think that they functioned more effectively than Christian officials—but precisely because they were Jews. Religious sentiment and firm beliefs about what constituted a divinely ordered

⁴² ACA: C 22: 76r (4 November 1277): an order to Jucef Avinçaprut and the local justice to proceed in all investigations; C 40: 81v (2 April 1278): instructions to Salamó Alconstantini to investigate all persons holding rental properties; C 48: 19r (12 May 1280): an order to Avinçaprut to confiscate all garden properties held “in Ramblam Muriveteris . . . in prejudicium nostrum et sine aliquo justo titulo”; C 48: 19r (same date): another order to Avinçaprut to conduct all the *inquisitiones* that the king’s procurator commanded; and C 49: 64r (1 April 1281): instructions to Avinçaprut to shut down all ovens operating in the *terme* of Morvedre without royal license, since ovens are a taxable utility.

⁴³ *Aureum opus*, 29v–30r: “concedimus et confirmamus ac etiam damus de presenti quibuscunque et singulis civibus et populatoribus civitatis Valencie et regni eiusdem omnes domos, vineas, campos, hortos, censualia, alchareas et castra, turres et possessiones cultas et incultas que habent vel habebunt . . . in quocunque loco civitatis vel regni existant ex quacunque causa vel ratione ea habeant vel habebunt aut possidebunt cum titulo et absque titulo, cum cartis et absque cartis; et facimus cessare omnes demandas et petitiones quas civiliter aut criminaliter posueramus aut poni feceramus contra aliquos. . . .”

society inspired both nobles and townsfolk to call for the dismissal of Jewish bailiffs.⁴⁴

Anti-Jewish feeling, or disquietude over the high status of Jewish bailiffs, however, influenced the objections of the townsfolk more. Whereas rural lords encountered Jewish bailiffs only occasionally, Christians in a town like Morvedre had frequent contact with the Jewish bailiff or with local Jews. True, the Jewish bailiff and other Jews of the local *aljama* were not one and the same, but the presence of a Jewish bailiff gave local Jews greater confidence and esteem—self-esteem and esteem in the eyes of local Christians. The appointment of a Jew as bailiff, the local symbol of royal authority, had profound implications for the ordering and functioning of town society because it so overtly challenged, and threatened to subvert, the socioreligious order patently described in royal and canon law and passionately evoked by preaching friars. Christians, assuming Jewish and Muslim inferiority as a minimum condition of their own prestige in local society, were confounded by Jewish bailiffs, for these did not seem to be like Jews condemned to degradation and servitude because of their rejection of Jesus as Messiah. The authority of Jewish bailiffs was too jarring; it challenged Christians endeavoring to make local Jews somehow fit the archetypal Jew of Catholic theology. Things were out of kilter and had to be righted. The need for correction was greatest in Valencian towns with Jewish bailiffs and Jewish communities, like Morvedre, because in these towns society was still in the making. If, at this early stage, Jews established themselves as authority figures in local society, then the aspirations of Christian settlers for empowerment and social mobility, and for a society like or better than the one they had left, might come to naught.

The urban folk of the kingdom of Valencia, however, were not satisfied with just the removal of Jewish bailiffs. Inhabitants of emergent colonial towns, they sought and obtained from the king additional means of distinguishing and humiliating the Jews in their midst while reaffirming their own superiority. In fact, the *Privilegium Magnum*

⁴⁴ Here I differ with D. Romano, "Los funcionarios judíos de Pedro el Grande de Aragón" *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, 28 (1969–1970), 8–9; Shneidman, "Jews as Royal Bailiffs," 64–66; *idem*, *The Rise of the Aragonese-Catalan Empire, 1200–1350*, 2 vols. (New York, 1970), 2: 432–440, 485; and Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, 133, who expresses agreement with Romano and Shneidman.

included a series of laws regulating Jewish affairs. One law, which the king “conceded” to the Christians of the kingdom, required all Jews beyond ten years of age to wear a round cape “according to the custom of Barcelona” when they were outside of the town’s Jewish quarter, “since the Jews are not in one faith or belief with us.”⁴⁵ King Pere confirmed his father’s amendment to the *Furs* obliging Jews involved in lawsuits with Christians to take a demeaning oath which included the many curses they would suffer should they perjure themselves.⁴⁶ Pere also agreed to a potentially damaging modification of judicial procedure in civil suits between Jews and Christians: Christians could now support their claims against Jews with the testimonies of two “good and honest” Christian witnesses, whereas previously Christians needed the testimony of a Jew as well.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ *Aureum opus*, 32v: “Item cum iudei non sint in una fide seu credentia nobiscum, propter quod inter vestes christianorum et iudeorum distinctio habitus debet esse, statuimus et ordinamus per civitatem et loca regni Valencie quod quilibet iudei ultra etatem decem annorum portent capam rotundam indutam ad consuetudinem barchinonensem eundo per civitatem vel per villam, excepto eorum callo. . . .” ACA: C 46: 152v (11 January 1284); recognizing that at the time he “concessimus quod iudei civitatis et regni Valencie portent capas rotundas” he did not specify when the Jews of the kingdom had to begin wearing the capes, King Pere orders that all Jews, including the poor, must be wearing the capes by the following Easter.

⁴⁶ *Aureum opus*, 32v: “ordinamus quod observent et confirment per civitatem et regnum esmenda fori Valencie que facta fuit super facto sacramentalis maledictionum iudeorum.” For Jaime I’s amendment, which was based on the *Statutus usurarum* promulgated by Jaime at Girona on 25 February 1241, see *Furs*, 4: 55–56, Llibre IV. Rúbrica IX.XXI. King Pere subsequently modified the above order slightly. Because it was so time consuming to compel each Jew involved in a lawsuit to swear on the lengthy maledictions, Pere agreed that it was sufficient to require all the Jews involved in the case to swear one time on the maledictions together. See J. Amador de los Ríos, *Historia social, política y religiosa de los judíos de España y Portugal* (Madrid, 1960), 906–909, for the text of the Jewish oath and curses.

⁴⁷ *Aureum opus*, 33v–34r: “Statuimus et ordinamus quod duo christiani boni et honesti possint probare per eorum sacramentum et cum demandatore erunt tres contra quemlibet iudeum in facto civili.” ACA: C 46: 152v–153r (11 January 1284); troubled by this modification of the judicial procedure established by Jaime I (see *Furs*, 4: 77, Llibre IV. Rúbrica IX.LI), the Jewish *aljamas* of the kingdom sent a delegation to King Pere to request that he not ratify it. The king responded that since he had promulgated this ordinance at the request of the leading men and people of Valencia, he could not repeal it, and had no intention of doing so, without their assent. Still, Pere ordered his son Jaime and the Justice of Valencia to confer with local officials on the matter and to render a decision in conformity with the *Furs*. A decision consistent with the *Furs* should have voided Pere’s ordinance, but it is not clear what conclusion they reached at this time. In any case, Jaime II would rule fourteen years later that two Christian witnesses were sufficient in any criminal case between Jew and Christian. It is significant that one of the textual variants cited by Colón and García (the editors of the *Furs*) reads “feyt civil e en tot fet criminal.” See *Furs*, 4: 78, Llibre IV. Rúbrica IX.LII.

Another law, less harmful but also intended to distinguish and segregate the Jews, forbade Jews to slaughter meat in the Christians' abattoir.⁴⁸

There is no way of knowing whether royal officials consistently enforced these laws. Even so, the king's willingness to concede such regulations to his Valencian Christian subjects suggested to them that he truly shared their goal of building a just, Christian society in which Jews and Muslims would occupy a subordinate position. It was more consistent with the stance of a king who had required Jews to attend the sermons of missionizing mendicants.

The clauses relative to Jews in the *Privilegium Magnum* did not go unnoticed among the Christians of Morvedre. Emboldened by the permanent removal of Jewish bailiffs, whose authority and influence with the king had discouraged untoward moves against local Jews, municipal officials tried to tax the Jews unfairly while Christian townsfolk took advantage of the altered civil litigation procedures to renege on the contracts they had made with Jews.⁴⁹

Bereft of the authority of a bailiff and denied the possibility of ever again attaining it, Jucef Avinçaprut, the last Jewish bailiff of Morvedre, became more vulnerable to the attacks of his opponents, both Christian and Jewish. In 1286 Avinçaprut complained that the justices of Morvedre had been harassing him for a long while. The justices had already sold some of his property, perhaps because he owed money to the crown, had allegedly sentenced him in violation of the *Furs*, and had subjected him to "many oppressions."⁵⁰ Along with the *jurats*, the justices were the most important municipal officials, and, like them, were concerned to protect the town's rights and revenues against the encroachments of the crown. Harrying a former royal bailiff, particularly a Jewish one, must have afforded them considerable pleasure.

The noble Bertran de Bellpuig, lord of Torres-Torres and Serra, took advantage of Avinçaprut's demotion to resist the Jew's efforts

⁴⁸ *Aureum opus*, 32v.

⁴⁹ It was at this juncture that the municipality attempted to force Jewish proprietors to pay more than Christians for irrigation canal maintenance (ACA: C 46: 208r). C 46: 208v (13 June 1284) addresses the problem of Christians backing out of their contractual obligations. See chap. 4 for a more detailed discussion in the context of Jewish moneylending.

⁵⁰ ACA: C 63: 95r (1 March 1286). ACA: C 199: 14r (15 January 1302) shows that Avinçaprut, by then deceased, had owed the royal court "certain quantities of money."

to collect the debts he owed him. Bertran and his brother Hug, who inherited Bertran's estate on his death in 1290, could not have defied Avinçaprut for so many years—in fact, until the former bailiff's death—had Avinçaprut possessed the power and resources of a key royal official.⁵¹ Even Avinçaprut's Jewish enemies recognized that the *Privilegium Magnum* had dealt him a staggering blow, and so after 1283 they too began to take action against him.⁵²

Another sign of the decline of Jewish power in Morvedre and environs after 1283, Jews soon ceased to exercise lordship over entire hamlets.⁵³ The phenomenon of influential Jewish "seigneurs" lording it over groups of Muslim and even Christian peasants had been strikingly incongruous with the theological and legal discourse about Jews that Christians received. Of course, the Jews who could claim anything like seignorial status had passed, or would soon pass, from the scene: Aaron Abinafia already spent most of his time in the kingdom of Aragon on the king's business, and his enterprising brother Abraham had moved to the capital by 1280; Jucef Avinçaprut was dead by 1302, and without any property, such as the hamlet of

⁵¹ ACA: C 81: 178r (1 September 1290): "[Causa] que vertitur inter manumissores et exequutores testamenti Bertrandi de Pulcro Podio quondam ex una parte et dictum Juceffum Avinseprut ex altera super hiis in quibus dictus Bertrandus injuriatur eidem Juceffo. . . ." ACA: C 199: 14r (15 January 1302) makes it clear that the point of dispute between Avinçaprut and Bellpuig, the matter in which Bellpuig was "injuring" Avinçaprut, was the noble's debts to Avinçaprut. Here King Jaume II pardons Hug de Bellpuig, Bertran's brother and heir, for the money Bertran owed the recently deceased Avinçaprut. The king notes that because Avinçaprut had been in debt to the crown, and because neither heirs nor property of Avinçaprut could be located, he had the right to demand this money from Bellpuig. The Bellpuig family had probably borrowed money from Avinçaprut in order to contend with its own considerable debts to the crown, which it had incurred early in the reign of Pere II (noted in ACA: C 106: 204r [3 December 1297]). Despite King Jaume's pardon, the ghost of Avinçaprut continued to haunt Hug de Bellpuig. In 1308 Isaac Passarell of Morvedre, to whom Avinçaprut had ceded his claims against Bellpuig, filed suit against the noble (ACA: C 142: 110r [23 July]).

⁵² See chap. 3.

⁵³ With the exception of the obviously sizeable *ortum* bequeathed by Bonet de Linas to the *aljama* of Morvedre sometime before 1321 and then acquired by Marc de Malonda (see chap. 1), the last reference I have to Jewish ownership of an *alqueria* in the *terme* of Morvedre is in ACA: C 104: 116v (24 September 1296), "super quadam alqueria quam idem Çalema [Barbut] habet apud Murvedre." Even this was disputed by two Christians of Valencia, Bonacors Loriguer and Martí Gispert, a scribe of the royal *curia*. Cf. R.I. Moore, "Anti-semitism and the Birth of Europe," *Studies in Church History*, 29 (1992), 37–39, regarding the earlier dispossession of Jewish landowners, especially owners of significant properties, in northern Europe.

Canet, which the king could repossess; and the Alconstantinis returned to Aragon shortly thereafter. Yet, although Jews continued to own and farm land around Morvedre, there were no Jews, however wealthy, who attempted to play the role of rural lord as these powerful Jews had. A kingdom that was no longer hospitable to Jewish bailiffs was not welcoming of Jewish lords either. Besides, it was only toward the end of the reign of Jaume I that a more thoroughgoing seigneurialization of the kingdom had really gotten underway.⁵⁴ Once more lands and castles were granted as fiefs, or sold, by Jaume's successors to members of the growing Valencian noble class, Jewish lordship would have seemed to many Christians an intolerable anomaly. Jews of means were not insensate; they were astute enough to know where and how to invest their resources without raising the hackles of the Christian elite. Indeed, mutually beneficial relations with the regional nobility would prove to be essential for the prosperity and even survival of such Jews in the years ahead. The nobles were more accepting of Jews who did not wield undue power and whose affluence and influence depended largely on their own patronage. The days of Jewish landlords collecting rent from entire hamlets populated by Muslim or Christian peasant vassals, and of Jewish bailiffs holding the keys to Morvedre's castle, were over.

The Enemies of Corpus Christi

The removal of Jews from positions of authority was not the final step in the process through which Christians—king, church, and populace—placed the kingdom's Jews in the niche that they deemed suitable. During the long reign of Jaume II the Jews experienced further humiliation and degradation. The basic sentiment expressed in the *Privilegium Magnum*—that “the Jews are not in one faith or belief with us”—became more compelling for Christians, and more problematic for Jews, as Christians more completely and profoundly identified themselves as a Christian body social united through a

⁵⁴ See Guichard, “Transformaciones,” 94–95, who discusses the processes of seigneurialization and feudalization, which were most marked under Pere II, Alfons II, and Jaume II; and E. Guinot Rodríguez, “La creació de les senyories en una societat feudal de frontera: el Regne de València,” *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 8 (1997), 79–108.

common faith and providential history. By 1338, on the centenary of the capture of Valencia from the Muslims, the Christians in the capital could confidently institute an annual festival on 9 October, the day of Jaume the Conqueror's triumphant entry into the city. At once civic and religious, the festival included a procession to the shrine of Sant Vicent, a fourth-century martyr, and thus linked Valencia's pre-Islamic Christian past to its Christian present.⁵⁵ The shared devotional life and historical consciousness that allowed for such ritual expressions of communal identity were not unique to the capital. They likewise informed the experience and molded the outlook of Christians in the kingdom's other urban centers. In Morvedre the Christian community found new outlets for its deepening and more affective piety. At its invitation, the Franciscans established a house in the town in 1295. The friars subsequently received many pious legacies from local residents. The townspeople also set aside property for the use of Beguins.⁵⁶

The Christians' feelings of *communitas* were intensified by a heightened Eucharistic spirituality. In the diocese of Valencia, as in the rest of Latin Christendom, the incorporation of the elevation of the consecrated host before the congregation into the ritual of the mass had been enhancing Christian adoration of the body of Christ. In 1258 the Dominican bishop of Valencia, Andreu d'Albalat, had enjoined priests to preach to the people that when the host is raised, they should kneel and "adore the body." The synodal legislation of Bishop Ramon Despont, issued in 1296, urged the same on priests.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ R. Narbona Vizcaíno, "El nueve de octubre. Reseña histórica de una fiesta valenciana. Siglos XIV-XX," *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 5 (1994), 231-238; and *idem*, "Héroes, tumbas y santos. La conquista en las devociones de Valencia medieval," *Sàitabi*, 46 (1996), 306-310.

⁵⁶ On the foundation of the Franciscan convent in Morvedre, see n. 7. ACA: C 173: 78r (2 May 1321) concerns the "legata plurima" bequeathed to the convent; and C 166: 261v-262r (5 July 1318) the property for "usus beguinorum in dicto loco comorantium."

⁵⁷ Pérez, "Sínodos medievales," 556, for the 1258 synod of Andreu d'Albalat: "sacerdotes . . . elevent [the host] caute, ita ut possit videri ab omnibus, quia tunc ist ibi Corpus Christi. Et predicetur populo quod tunc omnes flectant genua et adorent Corpus"; and 650 for the 1296 synod of Ramon Despont: "Sacerdos etiam quilibet frequenter doceat plebem suam, ut cum in celebratione missarum elevatur hostia salutaris se reverenter inclinet." On the growth of Eucharistic devotion throughout the Latin West, see M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991), esp. 49-82 on the elevation of the host and its growing ritual significance.

The priests conveyed to their parishioners a sense of oneness in and through the body of Christ.

Growing Christian veneration of the body of Christ had a deleterious effect on Christian perception of Jews, at the very least because the deeply felt experience of community which taking or viewing the sacrament imparted accentuated the Jews' position as outsiders. Jaume II himself, together with the church, fostered such sentiments among his Christian subjects. The king pursued a complex Jewish policy, on the one hand encouraging mendicant preaching to the Jews and on the other demanding the clearer identification and separation of the Jews whom the friars could not persuade to accept baptism. Guided by fiscal imperatives and a sense of justice, Jaume also vigorously protected the Jews against all aggressors, lay and ecclesiastical.

King Jaume promoted mendicant missions to Jews and Muslims even more energetically than his predecessors. In 1296 he required Jews and Muslims to listen to the preaching of the Dominicans, whenever the friars wished "to expound the word of God" to them, and to respond "reverently" to their questions and arguments. The king endeavored to make baptism more attractive by ruling that proselytes should not lose any property as a result of their conversion.⁵⁸ Desiring to assist the Franciscans, whom Pope Clement had ordered to preach to the Jews, in 1307 Jaume instructed royal officials to compel all Jews in their jurisdiction to gather in the local synagogue and "patiently" give the Franciscans a hearing. Christians could attend the sermons as well, but officials were to prevent them from verbally or physically assaulting the Jews.⁵⁹ Jews residing in towns with Franciscan houses, like Morvedre and Xàtiva, were no doubt paid a visit by the friars.⁶⁰

Compared to the apparent failure of their missionizing among Valencian Jews during the reigns of Jaume I and Pere II, the friars enjoyed some success in the Valencia of Jaume II. They persuaded at least seven Jews to convert—three in the capital, three in Xàtiva, and one in Morvedre. Although there were likely other converts who did not need the help of King Jaume, these seven all sought his

⁵⁸ ACA: C 104: 65r (27 August 1296); reiterated in C 106: 88v–89r (7 November 1297) and included in *Aureum opus*, 40v, privilege VI. See also Assis, *Golden Age*, 54–58; and Riera, "Llicències," 118–119.

⁵⁹ ACA: C 139: 296r–v (2 June 1307).

⁶⁰ Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 198–202; and Webster, *Els Menorets*.

assistance in resolving the disputes and problems they were having with Jewish relatives or the local *aljama*.⁶¹ The apostate in Morvedre, Francesc de Vilario, complained that his brother-in-law, Jacob Aldoctori, was hindering his children, Astruc and Stella, from receiving baptism, even though the children had allegedly expressed a desire to convert. Francesc's Jewish wife had probably asked "Uncle Jacob" to intervene. The king responded prudently to this painful struggle between parents over the souls of their children: if the local justice found that the children indeed desired baptism, then he was to remove all "impediments," but if he was convinced that they wished to remain Jews, then he was to permit them to do so.⁶²

The greater susceptibility of Valencian Jews to mendicant preaching may well have been partly a consequence of the dramatic shift in their fortunes since 1283. The individual Jew's recognition that neither he nor one of his fellows could ever again enjoy the power and prestige associated with the office of bailiff modified his perception of his and his community's standing vis-à-vis Christian government and society. In terms of attaining the worldly benefits and trappings of public office, adherence to Judaism was now a dead end. Loyalty to Judaism also entailed submission to the grinding fiscal exploitation initiated by Pere II and exposure to the growing harassment of Christians on religious and economic grounds.⁶³

Still, the great majority of Jews chose not to convert. For the Christian populace in towns like Morvedre the Jews' rejection of the preaching of their beloved Franciscans was a reminder that the Jews had disdained the message of Jesus himself and had also tortured

⁶¹ ACA: C 105: 150v (2 October 1296): King Jaume places three converts in Valencia under royal protection against the "verba contumeliosa" and other abuses of local Jews. C 141: 203r (19 February 1308): a female convert in Xàtiva complains that her baptized husband, influenced by his Jewish father, fled to Toledo to return to Judaism. C 380: 216r (28 September 1327): Bonanat Ferrari, a convert in Xàtiva, objects that the local *aljama* confiscated his houses in the Jewish quarter because of the debts he had incurred, when still a Jew, to the Jew Astruc Aleç. For cases in Catalonia, Aragon, and Mallorca, see Assis, *Golden Age*, 54–58.

⁶² ACA: C 143: 251r–v (3 May 1309): "Franciscus de Vilario, olim judeus, nunc ad fidem christi conversus, exposuit coram nobis quod cum ipse habeat filium quandam vocatum Astrugo et filiam quandam nomine Stellam, judeos qui ad fidem christi similiter converti desiderant, Jacob Adoctori, judeus Muriveteris, avunculus eorundem, contradicit et impedit quominus dicti judei possint effici christiani." Francesc was probably a protégé of the local Franciscans.

⁶³ On the difficulties faced by Jews over fiscal and credit issues, see chaps. 3 and 4, respectively.

his body. Their heightened religious sensibilities increased their incomprehension of Jewish obduracy.

Despite the loss of a few of their members to the church, most Jewish communities continued to grow during Jaume II's reign. Some of them attempted to enlarge existing synagogues or even to build new ones to accommodate their greater numbers. Such actions perturbed Ramon Despont, bishop of Valencia (1289–1312), chancellor and confidant of King Jaume. Having entered the missionary Dominican Order as late as 1303, Bishop Ramon frowned on any manifest increase in the number of infidels in his diocese, and he complained to the archbishop of Tarragona that mosques were more numerous than churches there.⁶⁴ Probably a consequence of his intervention with the king, the Jewish *aljama* of Valencia had to pay the crown, at the end of 1304, a heavy fine of 16,000 sous b. for having unduly increased the dimensions of its synagogue and house of study.⁶⁵

In March 1305 messengers from the *aljama* of Morvedre appeared before King Jaume in Barcelona to inform him that Bishop Ramon intended to have their synagogue torn down. The messengers pointed out that previous bishops had not objected when the Jewish community enlarged or beautified the synagogue, but they neglected to tell the king that what really upset Bishop Ramon was the fact that the community had abandoned its old synagogue and built a new one next to it. The bishop received the testimony of "many trustworthy" persons in Morvedre that the synagogue was indeed newly constructed, though precisely when this had taken place was unclear. Two letters from the king were required to prevent the headstrong bishop from destroying the new synagogue. King Jaume decided that it was not unreasonable for a growing Jewish community to build a new house of prayer, especially if it had already vacated its old one.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, 205; and Goñi Gaztambide, *Bula de la cruzada*, 271, for the bishop's role in the organization of Jaume II's crusade against Almería in 1309.

⁶⁵ ACA: C 202: 202r (27 December 1304).

⁶⁶ ACA: C 134: 268r–v (26 March 1305); and C 235: 213r (22 April 1305) are the two royal letters treating this matter and are partially transcribed in M.D. Meyerson, "Bishop Ramon Despont and the Jews of the Kingdom of Valencia," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 29 (1999), 644–645, nn. 13–14. See also the more general comments of Assis, *Golden Age*, 210–212.

Though not greatly alarmed by indications that the number of Jews in the kingdom was rising, the king still endeavored to prevent Jews from mingling too freely with the Christian population. He hoped to preclude the development of social conditions like those which enabled Jorayffa, a Jewish woman in Morvedre, not only to fornicate with Christian and Jewish men herself but also to arrange liaisons between other Jews and Christians.⁶⁷ Residential separation of the two groups was of course fundamental. While all the older and sizeable Jewish communities in the kingdom were already housed in defined Jewish neighborhoods, the much newer community in Oriola was not. In 1318 Jaume reiterated an order to the bailiff there that he find a "place where they [the Jews] might live and be completely separate from cohabitation with Christians."⁶⁸ He did not hesitate to accede to the request of the Jews of Morvedre in 1321 that walls be built around their quarter.

When Jaume learned that Jews traveling about the kingdom sometimes lodged in the homes of Christians, even in towns which had a Jewish quarter, he demanded, in order "to obviate the dangers threatening from this," that Jewish travelers stay in the houses of other Jews—that is, if there were other Jews. Plenty of towns did not have Jewish inhabitants; hence Jaume allowed, in the interests of commerce, that in such places Jews could sleep in Christian homes.⁶⁹ The king, however, was less than consistent in enforcing his own orders. In 1325 the fact that a Christian innkeeper of

⁶⁷ ACA: C 373: 44r (4 February 1325): "Jorayffa, judea Muriveteris, plura et enormia crimina comisit et specialiter adulterium sive fornicationem tam cum christianis quam judeis, et etiam dat operam ut inter christianos et judeas et christianas et judeos similis committatur." These crimes were to be "fortiter castigari."

⁶⁸ ACA: C 166: 53v (25 March 1318): "locum ubi morarentur et essent a cohabitatione christianorum omnimodo separati." Jaume also ordered that the Jews be allowed to sell the houses they presently owned "inter christianos." Creating the new Jewish quarter was a lengthy process; C 169: 113v (17 March 1320) treats the establishment of a synagogue there.

⁶⁹ ACA: C 166: 32r-v (14 March 1318): "Cum pervenerit ad nostrum auditum quod in nonnullis locis dicti regni judei extranei declinantes ad ipsa loca hospitantur in domibus christianorum, licet in locis ipsis judarie existant. Ideo volentes imminentibus ex hoc periculis obviare. . . ." See chap. 1 for a discussion of this order in an economic context. In 1326 the municipal government of Valencia issued legislation forbidding Jewish visitors to lodge or eat in the homes of Christians; they had to do so in the *jueria*—see F. Danvila, "Clausura y delimitación de la judería de Valencia en 1390 á 91," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 18 (1891), 148, n. 1.

Morvedre, Berengaria de Podiolo, provided accommodation to an itinerant Jewish physician, Rabbi Azarias, together with his son and student, elicited no comment from him.⁷⁰

These efforts to segregate the Jews, while reflecting royal concerns, did little more than confirm prevalent social practice, for most Jews preferred to live amidst their coreligionists and to lodge with them when on the road. Such segregationist provisions created far fewer difficulties for the Jews than earlier royal measures which were more directly pertinent to the Jews' troubled relationship with the body of Christ. King Jaume had himself attended the Council of Vienne (1311–12), where the establishment of the feast of Corpus Christi was discussed.⁷¹ His own Eucharistic devotion fused with his anxiety to protect his Christian subjects from undue contact with Jews, moving him to rule, sometime before September 1312, that Jews must wear “a certain sign” over their chest on their outer garment; those who did not would incur a “certain penalty.”⁷² The cape prescribed in the *Privilegium Magnum* was insufficient for the purpose of identifying Jews and less evocative than the new *signum*. The *signum* was a round badge, red, or half red and half yellow in color.⁷³ Purposely round like the Eucharistic bread, the body of Christ, and at least partially red as a signification of the blood of Christ, the badge at once identified its contemporary Jewish wearers with biblical Jews

⁷⁰ ACA: C 186: 14r (15 May 1325). The matter came to the king's attention because a candelabrum and money had been stolen from Azarias. Prince Alfons's patronage of Azarias—suggested by his intervention on the physician's behalf—may explain why Jaume said nothing about his illicit lodging. ACA: C 373: 144r–v (26 April 1325) is the initial letter of Prince Alfons to the justice of Morvedre, from which it is clear that there were also Christians staying at the same inn (“jacuerunt in Muroveteri in quodam hospicio ubi hospitabantur simul cum christianis”).

⁷¹ On the establishment of the feast of Corpus Christi, finally in 1317 by Pope John XXII, see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 181–185.

⁷² ACA: C 240: 84v (26 September 1312): “Cum secundum quod per nos ordinatum est judei regni Valencie vel qui aliunde ibi venerint teneantur portare certum signum in superiori veste eorum ante pectus omnibus manifestum, apponita super hoc certa pena.” When the king learned “quod aliqui ex dictis judeis vadunt absque dicto signo et alii etiam sic portant ipsum absconsum quod ipsum manifestum non faciunt prout debent,” he commanded the bailiff general to exact the said *pena* from such Jews.

⁷³ ACA: C 240: 84v provides no details as to the shape and color of the *signum*. But see Assis, *Golden Age*, 284, regarding legislation on the Jewish badge in the thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Crown of Aragon; and ACA: C 1911: 46r [transcribed in Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 341–342, n. 1] on the red badge to be worn by the Jews of Morvedre in 1396.

responsible for the bloody sacrifice of Christ while distinguishing them from the community of Christian believers ever more united by its re-enactment of the sacrifice of Christ at the altar.⁷⁴ Given the association of the Jewish badge with the host and body of Christ, it is no wonder that some Valencian Jews risked penalization by covering the badge or not wearing it at all.⁷⁵

As another expression of his reverence for the host, Jaume ordained, on 11 September 1314, that whenever the host was carried through the city of Valencia, any Jews or Muslims in the vicinity had either to genuflect or remove themselves. All violators of the ordinance were to pay a fine of one gold *morabatín* or suffer ten lashes.⁷⁶ For Jaume, a supporter of mendicant missions to his non-Christian subjects, such a measure was meant not just to emphasize the exclusion of Muslims and Jews from the Christian body but also to encourage their absorption into it. After all, Christians too were supposed to kneel before the host.⁷⁷ Being forced to join Christians in

⁷⁴ C. Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians, and the Pig*, trans. C. Volk (New York, 1997), 155–158.

⁷⁵ See n. 72. Still, most Jews did wear the Jewish cape and badge outside of Jewish quarters. Complaining to the king about the efforts of the vicar of the local church to collect oblations from Jewish householders in the *jueria*, the Jews of Morvedre described the *jueria* as a “loco in quo est licitum ipsis judeis incedere sine capa judayca et signo quo a christianis et ceteris distinguntur” (ACA: C 171: 254r–v [3 April 1321]).

⁷⁶ *Aureum opus*, 57r. A canonical antecedent of this law was promulgated at the Council of Vienna in 1267—C.-J. Hefele and H. Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles* (Paris, 1914), vol. 6, part I, 138. M. Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven and London, 1999), 30–31, cites other examples of similar secular and ecclesiastical legislation. The feast of Corpus Christi itself was first celebrated in Valencia in 1326. However, it was not until 1355 that the city celebrated it with a “general procession . . . that united the parishes and people of the city.” See R. Narbona Vizcaíno, “Ideología y representación cívica en la sociedad hispánica medieval,” in *idem*, *Memorias de la ciudad. Ceremonias, creencias y costumbres en la historia de Valencia* (Valencia, 2003), 126–127, n. 27; H. Mérimée, *L’Art dramatique a Valencia, depuis les origines jusqu’au commencement du XVII^e siècle* (Toulouse, 1913), 9–19; and F. Very, *The Spanish Corpus Christi Procession: A Literary and Folkloric Study* (Valencia, 1962), 5–6. C. Zika, “Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century Germany,” *Past and Present*, 118 (1988), 38, points out that before the institution of Corpus Christi Day processions in 1317 and after, small processions for carrying the host to the sick, for instance, were already important. Such was obviously the case in Valencia.

⁷⁷ Useful in this regard are the comments of M. Rubin, “Desecration of the Host: the Birth of an Accusation,” *Studies in Church History*, 29 (1992), 172, who points out that the earlier tales emphasized “the possibilities of inclusion and absorption of the doubting Jew.” K. Stow, “Holy Body, Holy Society: Conflicting Medieval Structural Conceptions,” in *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*, ed. B. Kedar and R. Werblowsky

“reverence of the most blessed body of Our Lord” might favorably impress the infidels.

The Christians of Valencia, however, focused on the exclusivist tenor of King Jaume’s law and took it one step further. They interpreted the law as empowering them to make various ritual moments occasions for humiliating Jews, and they immediately took advantage of it. Less than two months after the promulgation of the law, the Jews of Valencia protested that when they tried, in obedience to it, to hide in the houses of Christians as the host was being carried through the streets, Christians ejected them from their houses. Once thrown into the street, they were subjected to the mockery of Christian bystanders and fined or whipped. Even processions bearing only a crucifix without the host inspired Christians to stone Jews.⁷⁸

The Jews had instinctively entered the homes of Christian acquaintances or even friends to get out of the path of the processions; they were shocked and chagrined by the reception the Christians gave them. The Jews confronted, outside the confines of Holy Week, the awesome power of the symbols of host and crucifix to erect barriers instantaneously between themselves and members of the Christian body social. It was especially disconcerting that processions bearing these symbols occasioned their own humiliation, a ritual articulation of their inferior position in a Christian kingdom, a reminder of how far they had fallen since 1283.⁷⁹

Even though King Jaume’s ordinance pertained to them as well, the Muslims of Valencia did not voice any complaints about ensuing Christian behavior toward them. Christian religious processions necessarily excluded Muslims too; yet the Muslims, since their ancestors had not played any role in the Passion of the biblical Christ, were out of the Christians’ minds as well as, if they were wise, out

(New York, 1998), 151–171, discusses various medieval Christian understandings of Corpus Christi and their negative implications for the Jews.

⁷⁸ ACA: C 155: 180r–v (5 November 1314).

⁷⁹ The comments of M. James, “Ritual, Drama and Social Body in the Late Medieval English Town,” *Past and Present*, 98 (1983), 15, 24, though obviously not directly applicable to the religiously plural towns of Spain, are quite useful. Another, somewhat later, example of Christian efforts to humiliate Jews comes from Xàtiva, where the local justice was forcing Jewish litigants to swear the oath “super maledictionibus” publicly before Christian bystanders, who then “vituperated and derided” the Jews (ACA: C 187: 257r [15 May 1326]). King Jaume instructed the justice to receive the oath from the Jews “separatim et ad partem.”

of their sight.⁸⁰ More importantly, the vanquished Muslims had not threatened to invert the socioreligious order conceived by Christian kings, clergy, and settlers. Christians did not feel a need to remind them of their place through the use of religious rituals.⁸¹

Despite the fact that Jewish complaints emanated from the *aljama* of Valencia, since it was the capital to which the new law mainly applied, King Jaume directed his letters ordering the deterrent of such Christian aggression to all officials in the kingdom.⁸² He no doubt realized the potential for similar problems in other towns. Their Jewish *aljamas* certainly did. Hence, around a week later, “the Jews of the kingdom” made a point of expressing their concerns to the king about the Holy Week violence that occurred in Valencia and other towns every year. They perceived a linkage between it and the aggressive conduct in which Christians emboldened by the royal ordinance were now engaging at other ritual moments. Since minor processions were degenerating into bouts of mocking and stoning Jews, the Jews feared that by March 1315 Christian religious hostility might reach a fever pitch, unleashing violence worse than the breaking into Jewish homes and cemeteries and theft of Jewish goods to which Jews had perforce been growing accustomed.⁸³

The fall of 1314 was not the first time during the reign of Jaume II that Jews in the kingdom voiced complaints about the events of the Easter season just past or anxieties about what lay in store for them the coming Easter. The communities of Valencia, Morvedre, and Xàtiva had already done so in 1304–5 and 1308; those of Valencia, Oriola, and Elx would do so again in 1320–21 and 1327.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Since Muslims accepted Jesus as a prophet, in the kingdom of Aragon at least they sometimes joined Christians in inflicting violence on Jews during Holy Week. See Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 198–199, 206.

⁸¹ Christians had other methods, more political in their import, of reminding Muslims where they stood in Valencian society. See, for instance, Meyerson, “Slavery and the Social Order.”

⁸² ACA: C 155: 180r–v.

⁸³ ACA: C 155: 173v (11 November 1314): “quod quolibet anno in septimana sancta . . . [Christians] expugnant judarias predictorum locorum, portalia et portas domorum et cimiterii ipsorum judeorum frangendo ac raubam ac alia bona a dictis domibus extrahendo et plura alia dampna ipsis judeis implendo.” The king instructed his officials to protect the Jews. Judging by the lack of Jewish complaints about Holy Week violence in 1315, royal officials must have succeeded in keeping the violence at normal, manageable levels.

⁸⁴ ACA: C 133: 125r (4 November 1304), C 134: 192r (26 December 1304); Valencia; C 134: 268v (5 April 1305); Morvedre; C 289: 57r (16 April 1308);

Yet it is striking that between 1283 (and even this involved pre-emptive measures initiated by King Pere and Prince Alfons) and 1304 Valencian Jews had not expressed, with regard to what transpired “in any year,” grievances and disquietudes serious enough to warrant some royal command or action. Something was happening during Jaume II’s reign that made Holy Week violence at times especially vicious.

The cumulative efforts of the bishops and clergy of the kingdom to inspire a more fervent Eucharistic devotion among the laity created the context for more extreme forms of Easter violence. Brooding over the torments Jews had allegedly inflicted on the body they were encouraged to adore moved Christians to avenge Christ with greater determination. Their Easter rituals became more violent: instead of simply showering stones on the *jueria* and Jewish houses, Christians were “invading” the *jueria*, smashing in the doors of and entering Jewish homes, and damaging or stealing Jewish property.⁸⁵ The aim of this ritual vengeance was not to kill or maim Jews but to dishonor them. In the Valencian idiom of honor, one understood by adherents of all three religions, forcible entry into the home of an enemy constituted not just an illegal “break-in” but a humiliating violation of sacred domestic space, a public display of the fact that the men of the house thus infringed could not defend their household and the women within.⁸⁶

The Easter rituals of 1304–5 and 1308 were unusually violent—or threatened to become so—because the Christians performing them were excited by the campaigns that Bishop Ramon Despont was conducting against Jewish moneylending. The 1320s also saw an unusual amount of conflict and litigation between Christians and Jews over credit issues.⁸⁷ For Christians, indebtedness to a Jew implied

Morvedre; C 141: 251v (29 April 1308); Xàtiva; C 170: 295v (4 December 1320); Oriola and Elx; C 171: 155r (13 January 1321); Valencia; and C 190: 12r–v (27 February 1327); Valencia.

⁸⁵ See nn. 83–84. In all of this I am not disagreeing with the interpretation presented by Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 200–230, so much as providing a more nuanced view of the changes in the form and meaning of Holy Week rituals in the kingdom of Valencia.

⁸⁶ See M.D. Meyerson, “‘Assaulting the House’: Interpreting Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Violence in Late Medieval Valencia,” in *The Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Dykman and M. Taccioni (University Park, PA, forthcoming).

⁸⁷ Meyerson, “Bishop Ramon Despont”; and see chap. 4.

dependence on and obligation to the Jew; it was, as well as being an economic concern, a matter of power. Christians registered their grievances about Jewish usury during Holy Week because the Holy Week rites entailed a reaffirmation of socioreligious hierarchies. Jewish creditors were not as powerful or as potentially subversive as Jewish bailiffs had been, but Christians still desired to shame them and to show them, letters of credit notwithstanding, who really was in charge.

The Jews of Morvedre understood very well what their Christian neighbors were up to when "some" of them burst through the doors of their homes on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week, 1308.⁸⁸ Only this time the Jews were not prepared to suffer such humiliation without paying the Christians back in like coin. On Good Friday, or perhaps on Saturday or Easter Sunday, the Jews stoned a church next to the Jewish quarter, perpetrated other outrages, and then shouted insults against the Christians and their religion.⁸⁹ The Jews knew that they could not win in this game of reciprocal ritual violence, but since it involved only themselves and local Christians, they counted on each side's knowledge of the rules of the game, and on municipal and royal officials, to prevent events from spiraling out of control. "Some men" of Morvedre, probably from among the Holy Week rioters, upped the ante, however, by organizing a "certain game" to take place on the upcoming Pentecost, for which a "multitude" of persons from "divers places" was gathering in the town. The Jews understood this Pentecost "game" to be a ritual riposte to their own impudent aggression during Holy Week. They feared that the Christian outsiders, who were unacquainted with them, might do serious damage to their property and persons.⁹⁰ Local

⁸⁸ ACA: C 289: 57r (16 April 1308): "aliqui homines Muriveteris . . . die jovis, die veneris et die sabbati in septimam sanctam, prestita armata, in domibus judeorum loci eiusdem irruentes eisdem judeis, fragendo fores domorum suorum, talando arboles. . . ."

⁸⁹ ACA: C 289: 58v (26 April 1308): "Cum nos [Queen Blanca] super quibusdam violenciis seu dampnis illatis per aliquos omnes Muriveteris judeis loci eiusdem die veneris sancta proxima preterita inquisitionem per vos [justice of Morvedre] fieri mandaverimus . . . et intellexerimus dictos judeos tunc temporis lapides proiesisse in quandam ecclesiam Muriveteris judarie eorum contiguam ac alia enormia comisisse et dixisse in christianorum et fidei catholice opprobrium et contemptum. . . ." The church in question was most likely the parish church of Santa Maria, which was adjacent to the *jueria*. See Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 221, for similar instances.

⁹⁰ ACA: C 289: 71v (24 May 1308): "Noveritis [municipal officials] ad nostram audienciam pervenisse quod in proximo venturo festo pentecostes apud dictum locum

officials succeeded in steering the visitors away from the Jewish quarter. Christians, Jews, and the municipal authorities seem to have recognized that in 1308 both sides had edged too close to the abyss. Afterward, Christians played their Holy Week games with a little less gusto, and Jews bore their humiliation a little more patiently.⁹¹

Potentially more dangerous than Holy Week rituals were Christian imaginings that the Jews living among them desired to torment and crucify Christian children in the manner of Christ or to desecrate the host. Ritual murder accusations did not cause problems for Valencian Jewry until 1330, when Jews in the capital were accused of killing a male child found dead in an irrigation ditch. Royal officials quickly intervened to shield the Jews from Christian attack.⁹²

Stories of Jewish host desecration, or at least notions that Jews might seek to abuse Christ's body, circulated earlier among Valencian Christians. As early as 1278 Bishop Jazpert de Botonach, in his legislation against the sale and pledging of church ornaments and chalices—"where the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is prepared"—forbade especially putting them in the hands of "infidels," since they "knowingly and maliciously pollute and befoul them." Given the prominence of Jewish lenders, the bishop certainly had Jews in mind. On the other hand, his successor, Ramon Despont, who issued detailed instructions for guarding hosts, fretted more about rats eating them than Jews stealing them.⁹³

Muriveteris multitudo diverstarum [sic] gentium ibidem congregandi est de diversis locis propter quodam joch que ibi facere intendunt aliqui homines dicti loci. Verum cum aljama judeorum dicti loci valde timeat ne propter congregationem dictarum gentium dampnum aliquid inferatur judarie predicte ville ac bonis seu personis suis." Pentecost fell on 2 June 1308.

⁹¹ The absence of protests from either the Jews or Christians of Morvedre about actions during Holy Week or Pentecost after 1308 suggests as much.

⁹² ACA: C 437: 272r-v (16-17 August 1330), cited in E. Lourie, "Cultic Dancing and Courtly Love: Jews and Popular Culture in Fourteenth Century Aragon and Valencia," in *Cross Cultural Convergences in the Crusader Period. Essays Presented to Aryeh Grabois on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. M. Goodich, S. Menache, and S. Schein (New York, 1995), 168-169, n. 39. There were earlier accusations in Biel, Aragon, in 1294, and Barcelona; see E. Lourie, "A Plot Which Failed? The Case of a Corpse Found in the Jewish Call of Barcelona (1301)," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 1 (1986), 187-220; and R. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven, 1988), 2-3.

⁹³ Pérez, "Sinodos medievales," 611-613, for the 1278 legislation of Bishop Jazpert ("et precipue infidelibus qui ea . . . scienter et maliciose maculant et deturpant"); and 655, for the 1296 legislation of Bishop Ramon.

Even if Valencia's bishops can hardly be regarded as disseminators of tales of Jewish host desecration, in all likelihood such tales, which had begun to proliferate in northern Europe in the 1280s and 1290s, spread across the Pyrenees and into the kingdom of Valencia over the course of Jaume II's reign. By 1304 Dominican preachers in Italy were including accounts of host desecration in their sermons.⁹⁴ Their brethren in the kingdom of Valencia, who were so active preaching to and about Jews, may well have done the same. Valencian Christians had for decades been encouraged in their Eucharistic devotions and at least some of them had heard Jews insult and ridicule elements of their religion, perhaps particularly the veneration of material representations of Christ and the saints. They formed an audience who would have found stories of Jews purposely mocking, sullyng, and even torturing hosts affecting and credible.

By the 1320s stories of Jewish host desecration, or of Jewish contempt for Eucharistic devotion, had gained enough currency in the kingdom that some Christians could play on the accepted wisdom to achieve specific and rather mundane goals. Pere Lezina, one of the Christians opposed to the attempt of Bonet Avincanes to monopolize Jewish wax-pressing in Morvedre, intuited that his Christian neighbors, and royal officials, took Jewish animus toward Christianity and Christian symbols for granted and that if he could just present them with suitable circumstantial evidence, they would leap to the desired conclusion—one damning to Avincanes. Having witnessed Avincanes angrily fling royal coins into the fire while arguing with a Jewish customer at his wax-press, Lezina informed the authorities that Avincanes had thus abused the coins, stamped with images of the king and the cross, out of disrespect, or worse, for the king and the church. The first of the formal charges against Avincanes, which the king instructed the bailiff general to investigate in January 1327, put it more strongly: "and he threw them [the coins] in the fire and he made them all burn there, and this in great vituperation of the lord King, of all Christendom, and especially of Jesus Christ." The charge drew its power from the associations which Lezina knew other Christians would make: that ill-using the image

⁹⁴ On the origins and diffusion of the tales, see esp. Rubin, "Desecration of the Host," 169–176; *idem*, *Gentile Tales*, 27–69; J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca, 1982), 238–240; and W. Jordan, *The French Monarchy and the Jews: From Philip Augustus to the Last Capetians* (Philadelphia, 1989), 192–194.

of a crucifix amounted to an insult to Christ and to all Christians, members of the mystical body of Christ. According to one of the Jewish witnesses, Lezina knew exactly what he was doing and had said to Avincanes when the incident occurred: "Traitor! I'll have you burned for throwing coins in the fire and not respecting the cross." The Jews realized that Lezina could severely damage their position in Christian Morvedre with such an accusation; hence even Avincanes's Jewish enemies denied it. In the end, the authorities did not punish Avincanes for this or other alleged crimes.⁹⁵ Still, Lezina's ability to seize on one angry gesture and to represent it in such a way as to manipulate both Christians and Jews shows just how effective parish life in Morvedre had been in inculcating Christians in a dichotomous world view which both strengthened their religious identity and rendered the Jews' situation more precarious.

That the king himself sometimes lent credence to such accusations did not help the Jews much. Just a few years before Lezina made his mischief in Morvedre, some residents of nearby Sogorb alleged that a local Jew named Mossé celebrated the Jewish Passover by molding *matzah* in the shape of the crucified Christ and burning it in an oven. King Jaume ordered the justice of Sogorb to question witnesses and arrest Mossé. When Mossé went into hiding, Jaume permitted the justice and others to kill him if he resisted arrest; were Mossé brought back alive, the justice was to punish him harshly "for the terror" of others.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ E. Lourie, "Mafiosi and Malsines: Violence, Fear and Faction in the Jewish Aljamas of Valencia in the Fourteenth Century," in E. Lourie, *Crusade and Colonisation: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Medieval Aragon* (Aldershot, 1990), essay XII, 85–89, treats the dispute over the wax-press, although for different purposes. The charges against Bonet Avincanes, and the depositions of nine Jewish witnesses, are transcribed by Lourie, 92–101, and are found in ACA: Real Audiencia, Procesos: Legajo 512/12 (7 January 1327). The first charge (93) reads: "e gitals el foch e feu los aqui tots cremar et aço en gran vituperi del senyor Rey, de total crestiandat e specialment de Jhesu Christ." Galafo Miganeques, a Jewish butcher, recounted Lezina's threat to Avincanes in his testimony (98): "traydor de Bonet us fare cremar que gitalos diners al foch e no salva la creu."

⁹⁶ ACA: C 246: 172r (17 February 1321): "Moçe, filius Juceffi, sartor judeus Sugurbie, nuper in festo pasche judeorum de quadam massa panis sive paste figuravit formam domini Jhesu Christi crucifixi ipsamque figuram in furno poni et comburi fecit." C 246: 211r (4 May 1321) is the order to the justice of Sogorb after the flight of Mossé. See also Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 220, who points out that Mossé had alleged accomplices. Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 25, notes the association of the oven with Christ's body, Jews, and danger.

King Jaume's credulity was consistent with his concern about the activities of sorcerers and necromancers in his domains. In 1321 he called for the punishment of Valencian Christians, Jews, and Muslims who practiced magic and necromancy.⁹⁷ The king was probably influenced by the Dominican inquisitors, who equated magic with heresy and who were increasingly active in crown territories, including the kingdom of Valencia.⁹⁸ Although the command was blanket in nature and not specifically anti-Jewish, it, and the activities of the inquisitors, created a volatile atmosphere in which accusations could be wielded against Jews to deadly effect. The following year a Jew of Xàtiva, Maçarih Avendrich, was burned "on account of his demerits." These, in all likelihood, involved the same kind of "nefarious *maleficiis*" which his son subsequently accused his Jewish and Christian enemies of engaging in. It is far from clear that the inquisitors were involved in this case.⁹⁹ Three years later, however, they were prosecuting Jews in Xàtiva for unspecified reasons.¹⁰⁰

Whatever King Jaume's response to allegations that Jews were mocking and abusing Eucharistic wafers and other Christian symbols, his Valencian Christians subjects had undoubtedly taken them

⁹⁷ ACA: C 246: 306r (20 November 1321). I take this command rather more seriously than does Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 119.

⁹⁸ J. Vincke, *Zur Vorgeschichte der Spanischen Inquisition. Die Inquisition in Aragon, Katalonien, Mallorca und Valencia während des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn, 1941); E. Peters, *The Magician, The Witch and The Law* (Philadelphia, 1978), 155–161; and Assis, *Golden Age*, 58–63, concerning Jews, inquisitors, and royal support (ambivalent at times) for the latter.

⁹⁹ ACA: C 371: 153r (18 October 1322). The letter is in response to the plea of Mossé Estapa, Jew of Xàtiva, "ut cum quidam judeus, filius de Maçarih Avendrich, judei Xative, qui ob sui demerita igni traditus extitit, plures tam christianos quam judeos de pluribus et nephandis maleficiis acusasset, inter quos ipsum Mosse de eisdem maleficiis similiter accusavit." I am assuming that the *maleficiis* are like the *maleficiis nigromantie* described by King Jaume in ACA: C 246: 306r.

¹⁰⁰ Vincke, *Vorgeschichte*, 66, no. 17 (ACA: C 302: 241r–v [15 April 1325]). This letter concerns confiscation of the prosecuted Jews' property by the royal bailiff; it provides no details as to the substance of the charges. The inquisitors probably proceeded against these Jews for having assisted relapsed Jewish converts from Provence. There was contemporaneous inquisitorial procedure against Jews of Calatayud, Aragon, for this cause—see Y. Assis, "Juifs de France réfugiés en Aragon (XIII^e–XIV^e siècles)," *Revue des études juives*, 142 (1983), 313–314. By 1352 inquisitors were prosecuting Valencian Jews for sorcery and necromancy—see Vincke, *Vorgeschichte*, 83, no. 46 (ACA: C 1320: 188v); and Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: 343, no. 249 (ACA: C 893: 124v). M.D. Meyerson, "Samuel of Granada and the Dominican Inquisitor: Jewish Magic and Jewish Heresy in Post-1391 Valencia," in *The Friars and the Jews in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. S. McMichael and L. Simon (Leiden, 2004), treats these issues in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

to heart. In the capital Christians devised a particularly gruesome means of exacting revenge on the Jews. When Jews bore their dead to the Jewish cemetery for burial, Christians threw stones not just at the burial party but at the corpses. They also defiled the cemetery and put filth in Jewish graves.¹⁰¹ Christians mistreated Jewish bodies just as Jews allegedly profaned Christ's body.

The removal of Jews from positions of authority in 1283 was the first step in a process, some forty years in duration, through which the Jews of the kingdom of Valencia were put in their place. As Valencian Christians developed more fully a sense of *communitas*, a feeling enhanced by and articulated through joint adoration of the Eucharist and other forms of religious expression, their efforts to degrade the Jews became more varied and purposeful. While the rites of Holy Week served to reaffirm the Christians' conception of socioreligious order and to preserve the Jews' inferior position within it, they also grew more violent and vicious in the first quarter of the fourteenth century. During Holy Week and on other occasions of religious ceremony Christians reminded Jews of where they now stood in Valencian society and of just how precarious their situation really was. The Jews necessarily learned to endure the more exquisite forms of humiliation devised by Christians and to control their own anger; swallowing abuse and exercising restraint became essential survival skills. The frequent ritual shaming of Jews satisfied Christians anxious to confirm their own superiority in a religiously plural kingdom. Stoning Jews, mocking Jews, violating the sanctuary of Jewish homes, desecrating Jewish corpses and graves—all this was enough. Christians needed to go no further. Christian mobs did not attack individual Jews or Jewish communities; they did not attempt to rid themselves of the Jews in their midst. Nor, beyond the realm of ritual, was there a marked rise in interpersonal violence between Christians and Jews. There were of course unfortunate individuals

¹⁰¹ ACA: C 190: 73r-v (1 April 1327). Just a month before, the municipal government of Valencia attempted to force local Jews to wear a different, presumably larger, badge "in dampnum et preiudicium sive etiam vituperium dicte aliamie" (ACA: C 190: 13r-v [27 February 1327]). Like the stoning of Jewish burial parties and desecration of Jewish graves and cadavers, this was intended to humiliate the Jews of the city further, and also like these actions, it was driven by Christian understanding of the Jews' relationship to Christ's body and the host. Desecration of the Jewish cemetery had apparently already occurred in Xàtiva; hence in 1321 King Jaime permitted the Jewish community to build a wall around it (ACA: C 219: 222v [5 February 1321]).

who found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time, like Abraham Abingalell of Morvedre, who, when traveling near Dénia in the south, was kidnapped and murdered by a Christian widow and her brother.¹⁰² There were also the economic grievances or rivalries which caused Pere Lezina and Pere Babot to make death threats to their Jewish competitors, Bonet Avincanes and Gento Asseyo, or which moved Guillem Romei of Morvedre to wound the Jewish lender Astruc Cortovi.¹⁰³ The closest the Jews of Morvedre had come to confronting Christian mob violence was on Pentecost, 1308. And even this involved a ritual “game” which may never have taken place.

Nevertheless, the *aljama* of Morvedre requested the construction of a wall around the *jueria*. The Jews already had their own “Jewish quarter in which they reside,” but they wanted the wall around it “for its more secure protection.”¹⁰⁴ What seems to have frightened the Jews of Morvedre most was not local Christians but foreigners: the French Shepherds’ Crusade. In June 1320 the shepherds attacked several Jewish communities in France. In July they crossed over into the Crown of Aragon, massacring the Jews of Montclus in the kingdom of Aragon and then threatening, and in some instances assaulting, the Jews and Muslims of some other Aragonese towns. Although the shepherds never reached the kingdom of Valencia, news of their activities did. King Jaume II himself was at least partly responsible for disseminating fear of the shepherds. He sent letters to the officials of all the Valencian towns with Jewish communities instructing them to defend the Jews from the shepherds. The king expressed himself

¹⁰² ACA: C 289: 135v (2 December 1309): “captionem factam fuisse de quodam judeo de Muroveteri vocato Abrafim Abingalell per Mariam vocatam Gallegam, que fuit uxor Bernardi de Bellera quondam, et post mortem ipsius judei, de qua frater dicte mulieris nomine G. Matfre fuit, ut dicitur, inculpatus et inde questionibus positus per justiciam de Denia.” ACA: C 156: 239r (10 September 1315) concerns the sentence—death by hanging—handed down by the justice of Sogorb against Domingo de Nuevalos, convicted of the murder of the Jew Gento Abinçalema.

¹⁰³ ACA: C 189: 118r (8 July 1326), concerning how Lezina and Babot “minantur dictis judeis ad mortem.” C 187: 289v (22 May 1326) deals with Romei’s wounding of Cortovi on the head and arm. This violence probably originated in the resistance of Christian debtors to Jewish creditors. C 187: 214v (28 April 1326) includes Astruc Cortovi in a list of eleven Jewish moneylenders from Morvedre who were involved in debt litigation with their Christian clients.

¹⁰⁴ ACA: C 219: 344v (5 May 1321) [transcribed in Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 332, n. 2]; see also chap. 1, n. 84. On the Jewish quarter of Valencia, see Danvila, “Clausura,” esp. 148, n. 1, for the order of the municipal government (1326) that Jews must live within the gates of the *jueria*.

so strongly in his letter to Morvedre's officials—at one point practically accusing them of letting the shepherds into Morvedre—that he later had to reassure them that his letters were really not in response to any anti-Jewish initiatives they had taken but were only intended to ensure that they remained vigilant.¹⁰⁵ When the Jews heard of the possibility of the shepherds arriving in Morvedre, they too wanted reassurance, the kind that walls could provide.

Exactly when the Jews petitioned the king for walls is not clear, but in his letter of 5 May 1321, in which Jaume ordered the bailiff general and municipal officials to allow the Jews to erect them, he noted that he had already granted the Jews license to do so. The need of the king to remind local officials to “permit” the Jews to enclose the *jueria* and not to place any “impediment” in their way is a bit odd.¹⁰⁶ The town fathers, it appears, did not think the construction of walls around the Jewish neighborhood to be a matter of great urgency and continued to be puzzled by the king's concern to provide the Jews with additional protection. The Jews, however, did not agree with the *jurats'* estimate of their own security. Rumors of the French shepherds' slaughter of Jews elsewhere had left them feeling more exposed and imperiled during the summer of 1320. After years of experiencing the more impassioned ritual violence of local Christians, the Jews had been uncertain as to how their neighbors would behave if incited by the shepherds. The Jews insisted on walls in 1321 because they knew that they had been lucky the previous summer. They perceived and felt the effects of the heightened religious sensibilities of local Christians; they had reason to fear that

¹⁰⁵ Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 43–92, for an account of the shepherds' activities and their ramifications in France and Aragon, and 73–74, regarding the letters to the Valencian authorities. ACA: C 246: 44r–v (4 July) and 45r (6 July) are the initial orders to officials in the kingdom of Valencia, including those in Morvedre. C 246: 61r (17 July) is Jaume's letter wrongly accusing Morvedre's officials of letting the shepherds in: “Nuncque intelleximus quod post mandatum nostrum predictum multos ex dictis pastorellis in dicta villa entrare permittatis incessanter.” C 246: 90v (21 August) is the letter in which Jaume explains to the municipality his previous, rather hysterical letter: “nullam indignationem concepimus contra vos; immo tenemus est certo quod vos tanquam fideles et naturales nostri observaretis omnia mandata nostra, set ita expressivas litteras vobis et aliis misimus ut vos in dicto negotio cautius faceretis provisos.” By 24 August the scare was over—ACA: C 170: 129r.

¹⁰⁶ ACA: C 219: 344v: “mandamus quatenus hanc gratiam et concessionem nostram obpservantes permitatis dictos judeos clausuram predictam facere in et super ipsam vel eius opera constrahendo impedimentum eis aliquatenus faciatis.” See n. 104.

should the right—or wrong—circumstances present themselves in the future, they might not be so fortunate. Walls, moreover, might impede Christians from entering the Jewish quarter and breaking down their doors, and thus make Holy Week more bearable.

The walled *jueria* would henceforth demarcate and secure the physical presence of the Jewish community in Morvedre. Beyond simply delimiting a Jewish space in the town, the walls of the *jueria* were also and more importantly psychological markers, a material expression of the Jews' understanding of their changed position in local society. Prior to 1283 the local castle had been the symbol of Jewish status, not because the Jews viewed or needed it as a refuge but because it was the headquarters of the Jewish bailiff. The bailiff and the castle had inspired the Jews with confidence; they had not contemplated building walls. By 1321 the Jews possessed little confidence in their own power and influence, and even less in the restraint and perpetual goodwill of their Christian neighbors. They wanted walls.

CHAPTER THREE

FISCAL SERVITUDE

Official demotion and increasing ritual humiliation most dramatically evinced the worsening position of the Jews in Valencian society after 1283. Yet just as significant for bringing home to the Jews their utter subjection to Christian authority was the experience of living in the ever-tightening fiscal vise of the monarchy. Royal taxation affected their material life, sparked heated intra- and inter-communal conflict, and greatly influenced their economic strategies and dealings with Christians and Muslims. In the years after 1283 perhaps nothing, beyond fulfilling religious obligations, shaped the lives of Jews more than grappling, individually and collectively, with the incessant and mounting fiscal demands of the king.

The internal politics of the Jewish community came to center intensely and obsessively on questions of taxation, their resolution having a significant impact on the power and authority of individuals and families. With so much hinging on their fiscal service to the monarchy—royal privileges and protection, if not their very survival—Jews had no choice but to pay heavy taxes. Yet the Jews developed modes of evasion and passive resistance which enabled them to preserve wealth, social status, and self-respect. The Jews of Morvedre often proved to be elusive, defiant serfs of the royal treasury.

Tightening the Screws

Although after 1283 Pere II (1277–1285) ceased to utilize Jewish bailiffs in Morvedre, the Jewish community as a whole was still of considerable value to him, chiefly as a source of revenue. Under Pere fiscal pressure on the Jews of Morvedre and other Valencian *aljamas* increased dramatically, even before 1283. Appointing Jewish bailiffs and imposing more taxes on Jewish communities were not mutually exclusive royal policies, but after the concession of the *Privilegium Magnum* the Jews' utility was, in the king's eyes, less varied.

Jaume I had laid the groundwork for the more oppressive fiscal

policies of his successors. True, Jaume's primary concern had been to colonize and pacify the kingdom, and for this fundamental task he had welcomed Jewish as well as Christian settlers and had attracted them with the promise of land, homes, and a relatively light fiscal burden. Yet, once the Jewish community of Morvedre was well established, he began, as has been seen, to obtain more revenue from it.

More important, however, than the gradual increase in Jaume's fiscal demands was his legislation making all the Jews of his new kingdom essentially serfs of the royal treasury. According to the *Furs*, Jews who fled or moved to the lands of another lord were not thereby in any way freed from royal lordship; rather, "they are ours perpetually."¹ This stark affirmation, usually enforced, denied to Jews the mobility and bargaining power which Christian and Muslim peasants sometimes had and, from the mid-fourteenth century, increasingly would have. In the kingdom of Valencia neither Christian nor Muslim peasants were enserfed; both could, circumstances permitting, turn to another lord for a better arrangement or refuge. Even if legally prohibited from exercising such options, the crown's Jewish serfs did sometimes, as will be seen, maneuver effectively in the interstices between royal and seigneurial jurisdictions, and, like Christian and Muslim peasants, devise stratagems to evade the taxation of their royal lord.

In labeling the Jews "serfs of the royal treasury," the rulers of the Crown of Aragon were drawing an analogy between their relationship with their Jewish subjects and that which some Catalan and Aragonese lords had with their servile peasants.² Just like such lords who might extract from enserfed peasants as much rent and labor as prudence and peasant tempers permitted, monarchs wrung as much revenue as they could from their Jewish "serfs." Yet unlike the seigneurs, whose exactions from even unfree peasants law, custom, and the possibility of peasant rebellion usually limited, the kings

¹ *Furs*, 2: 82–83, Llibre I. Rúbrica VIII.III: "Si alguns juheus fugiran o iran a altre senyor ecclesiàstich o seglar, on en la senyoria d'altre faran casa o estaran, jens per ço no són de la nostra senyoria absolts que per tot temps no sien nostres, si donchs lo senyor del loch, de nós o dels nostres, no haurà sobre aquestes coses diffinitió o donatió."

² P. Freedman, *The Origins of Peasant Servitude in Medieval Catalonia* (Cambridge, 1991); and D. Abulafia, "The Servitude of Jews and Muslims in the Medieval Mediterranean: Origins and Diffusion," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome (moyen âge-temps modernes)*, 112 (2000), 687–714.

recognized really only one limitation when taxing the Jews: the bottom of the communal treasure chest. Pere II and his successors all managed, at one time or another, to come close to, if not actually, scraping the bottom of *aljama* treasure chests. Yet the kings never quite exhausted *aljama* resources. By offering partial tax remissions, by alternating years of astronomical demands with years of more reasonable requests, and by keeping the Jews' other creditors at bay, they enabled the *aljamas* to continue to provide them with substantial funds.

After the accession of Pere II, the fiscal requirements of the monarchy influenced Jewish politics to an unusual degree. Each new royal demand for a subsidy set in motion intense negotiations between *aljamas* and power struggles within them. In each Jewish community royal taxation encouraged class consciousness, enhanced or destroyed the prestige of families, and sparked the formation of factions. For the Jews fiscal servitude was more than an economic inconvenience or burden; it molded their way of life and became elemental to their identity.

To ensure that the Jews remained wholly the objects of royal exploitation and, hopefully, an inexhaustible source of revenue, monarchs had to provide for their physical security, shield them from the meddling and despoliation of municipal, seigneurial, and even royal officials, and foster their prosperity. Each monarch therefore took care to confirm the economic privileges his predecessors had granted the Jews or, if necessary, to bestow new ones.³ All measures facilitating the smooth and unimpeded functioning of *aljama* government were enacted and then prolonged.⁴ The kings usually inter-

³ ACA: C 66: 47r (19 April 1286): Alfons II confirms his father's privilege to Valencian Jews to sell freely grain, wine, and other commodities to Christians on credit; C 219: 198r (2 January 1321): Jaume II exempts the Jews of the kingdom and their merchandise from a variety of tolls and duties.

⁴ Pere II typically reviewed *aljama* privileges to make sure that none of them were prejudicial to royal interests. ACA: C 22: 84r (29 May 1278), and C 40: 111v (3 June 1278) are, respectively, his order to the bailiffs of many towns in the Crown of Aragon, including Morvedre, that they command local Jews to present the privileges the crown had granted them, and his order to many Jewish *aljamas*, including that of Morvedre, that they each send two or three representatives to the royal court to show their privileges to the king. ACA: C 41: 50v (17 March 1279) shows that initially Pere did not have time to review the *aljamas'* privileges, and so he instructed his officials to observe them. It seems, however, that the king eventually reviewed them, since on 8 May 1285 he commanded officials to return to the *aljamas* of Morvedre and of the kingdom of Aragon their charters of privilege; the

vened energetically against anyone who would put the Jews, and royal income, at risk.⁵ The *quid pro quo* for royal protection and privileges was the expeditious yielding of ordinary and extraordinary taxes. Perturbed that some Jews were, “through the vice of ingratitude,” concealing taxable assets and therefore not fulfilling their part of the bargain, Alfons III articulated, if a bit harshly, the fundamental royal outlook on the Jews:⁶

The Jews, whose own guilt reduced them to perpetual servitude, ought to consider . . . that they are tolerated by us through the grace of humanity . . . alone, and they ought to abstain from all things which they regard as diminishing and understand as damaging our revenues. . . .

An ambitious and expensive foreign policy left the ruling house of the Crown of Aragon constantly in need of funds. As a consequence

aljamas were to give the officials authenticated copies in return—ACA: C 56: 96v. Also on 8 May (C 56: 96r) Pere informed the *aljamas* of Morvedre, Valencia, Xàtiva, Calatayud, Zaragoza, and Huesca that they could use their Jewish judges to decide cases between Jews according to Jewish law (*gunnam vestram ebraicam*). At the same time, the king reminded these *aljamas* that certain of their members could not exercise “some offices,” a provision related to internal *aljama* politics. ACA: C 70: 14r (13 November 1286): the “procuratores judeorum” of Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia pay Alfons II a monetary “componitionem . . . ratione privilegiorum suorum et quorundam aliorum que sibi concessimus in Barchinone.” ACA: C 219: 198v (2 January 1321): Jaume II permits the Jews of the kingdom to make their “tacasas et constitutiones.”

⁵ Pere II prevented episcopal (ACA: 41: 98r [27 June 1279]) and municipal officials (C 46: 208r [13 June 1284]) from taxing the Jews of Morvedre unduly, and cautioned officials to guard the Jews from violence in the aftermath of earthquakes (C 46: 152r [11 January 1283]). In ACA: C 57: 223r (22 October 1285) he orders officials to stop placing liens on the dowries and marriage portions of Jewish wives when the resources of their indebted husbands were depleted (“salvetis eorumdem judeorum uxoribus totum jus eis competens super bonis eorum ratione dotium et sponsaliorum suorum”); such procedures violated the *Furs*. ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 169 (25 June 1326): Jaume II commands the bailiff of Morvedre, Guillem Fochau, to protect local Jews and not to harass them. In ACA: C 89: 55v (3 January 1295) he places Mossé Abenrodric of Morvedre under royal protection. Also, see chap. 2 for Jaume’s permission to the Jews of Morvedre to enclose their quarter with a wall.

⁶ ACA: CR Alfons III, caixa 7, no. 898 (17 September 1329): “Quamvis judei quos propria culpa submisit perpetue servituti . . . habere debeant quod a nobis sola humanitatis . . . gratia tolerantur et abstinere debeant ab omnibus que nostrorum iurium diminutionem respiciunt et sapiunt lesionem. . . . Ingratitudinis vicio . . . exquisitis coloribus excogitatis fraudibus et diversis machinationibus adveniens pro bonis que habent in civitatibus, villis et locis nostris . . . seu pro eorum peccuniis cum quibus negotiantur seu quas mutuant ad usuras non solvant nobis peytas, questias, subsidia, servicia vel alias exactiones regales, ymmo se latenter et fraudulenter eximant et se subtrahant ab eisdem, extorquentes a nostris subditis comodum et reliquis judeis in locis nostris degentibus premissorum onera relinquentes.”

of his conquest of Sicily in 1282, Pere II had to grapple with the alliance of the papacy, France, and the Angevins, and, in 1285, to defend his realms against a French invasion. He aggressively sought revenue from all his subjects, of whatever faith. This fiscal policy aroused the opposition of his Christian subjects in Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, and in 1283 they forced him to limit his fiscal demands. The Jews, however, were in no position to resist the king, and Pere, pressed by foreign and domestic enemies, was of no mind to relent. His successor, Alfons II (1285–1291), took the same approach to the Jews, for he too was immersed in negotiations over the matter of Sicily while facing the challenge of the Aragonese Union. Alfons, moreover, wrested Mallorca from his uncle Jaume at the outset of his reign and conquered Muslim Minorca in 1287.⁷

With his rapacious fiscal policy Pere II set the standard for his successors. The annual “tributes” he obliged Valencian Jewish communities to pay—500 sous in the case of Morvedre—remained constant,⁸ but such ordinary taxation was trivial in comparison to the extraordinary subsidies he and his sons exacted from the Jews as necessity required (see Tables 1–3). Pere also introduced a new method of extracting revenue from the Jews, really an extraordinary tax in all but name: in return for a costly settlement (*compositio*), he pardoned the Jews for all possible charges against them stemming from crown inquiries into their lending money at illegal rates of

⁷ J.N. Hillgarth, *The Problem of a Catalan Mediterranean Empire, 1229–1327* (London, 1975), 22–30; M. Sánchez Martínez, “La evolución de la fiscalidad regia en los países de la Corona de Aragón (c. 1280–1356),” in *Europa en los umbrales de la crisis (1250–1350) (XXI Semana de Estudios Medievales)* (Estella, 1994), 399–400. See chap. 2 for more on Pere’s domestic political difficulties.

⁸ ACA: C 59: 78v (2 September 1282) is a letter to the royal official Cervià de Riera informing him that Prince Alfons remitted to the Jews of Morvedre 100 sous of a 500-sous subsidy. ACA: C 59: 78r (1 September 1282), regarding collection of the same subsidy from the *aljama* of Valencia, states that “exigemus dictum subsidium ab aliis aliamis [including Morvedre] secundum tributum quod solvunt.” Thus, since the subsidy demanded from the *aljama* of Morvedre *secundum tributum* was 500 sous, the annual tribute for which the *aljama* was liable also must have been 500 sous. ACA: C 65: 39r (1 February 1286): Alfons II notifies the Valencian *aljamas* that they must render him the same annual tributes that they had last given his father (“solvendo dictum tributum in ea quantitate quam ipsum solvebatis anno ultimo vite . . . patris nostri”). C 71: 6v (24 November 1286) shows that these tributes were to be used toward the payment of the monthly expenses of the royal household.

interest.⁹ When taxing the Jews the king was frighteningly thorough. In 1284, for instance, he ordered many *aljamas*, Morvedre among them, to submit their accounts for his inspection. Pere's aim was to investigate the problem of tax fraud as well as to determine how much more taxation the communities could bear.¹⁰ The next year he went further, instructing the royal porter, Pere de Surià, to solicit from the *aljamas* lists enumerating the assets of every Jew: land and other properties, jewelry, and credits, including the names of the debtors.¹¹ When King Pere was desperate for money, he left no chest unopened, no stone unturned in the kingdom of Valencia's *jueries*.

He and his son Alfons made good use of the information compiled by Surià, perhaps too good a use, as the data on their extraordinary taxation show (see Tables 1–2). Between 1286 and 1289 there was an unmistakable and dramatic drop in the royal subsidies sought from and paid by the Jews of the kingdom and, in particular, the *aljama* of Morvedre. If near the end of his reign King Alfons showed some restraint in his fiscal policy toward Valencian Jews, it was only out of necessity. In a relatively short time, between 1285

⁹ ACA: C 44: 183v–184r (24 June 1280), and C 48: 116r (12 August 1280), where Pere commands the Valencian Jewish communities, and officials of Calatayud, to compel tax-exempt Jews to pay their share “in illa peccunie quantitate quam judei predicti nobis solvere tenentur ratione compositionis facte inter nos et judeos omnes terre nostre [super] petitione quam contra eos moverimus pro excessibus usurarum.” See Table 1 for the amount paid. The implications of such “pardons” for Jewish-Christian relations will be treated in chap. 4.

¹⁰ ACA: C 46: 216r (27 June 1284): Pere compels the *aljamas* to dispatch envoys to Albarracín bearing communal account books; and C 43: 29v (1 September 1284): in order to investigate tax fraud, Pere commands those Jews who have served as secretaries of the *aljamas* of Morvedre, Valencia, Xàtiva, and five Aragonese towns, to render their accounts. Much to the king's annoyance, by January 1285 he still had not seen the account books of the Morvedre and Xàtiva communities (C 43: 103r [7 January]). They delivered them the following month (C 56: 7v [22 February]).

¹¹ ACA: C 56: 49r (3 April 1285): “Mandamus vobis . . . certificetis vos si aljamas judeorum regni Valentie solverunt illa XXX mille solidos regalium quam per ipsos solvi mandavimus in subsidium presentis armatis nostre . . . infra mensem quam eis per nostras litteras duximus assignandum; ac certificetis vos in qua forma diviserunt inter se predictos denarios . . . et petatis ac habeatis ab unaquaque dictarum aljamarum albarana singulorum judeorum continenta totum id quod quilibet eorum inde persolvit in quantum solvit pro qualibet hereditatum suarum et pro qualibet re mobili et . . . pro debitis, nominando et specificando per minutum clare et aperte ipsas hereditates . . . res mobiles, joyas et quantitates debitorum et nomina debitorum et precium . . . Mandamus insuper dictis aliamis quod super predictis vos certificent ac vobis tradant albarana predicta in forma comprehensa, que albarana incontinenti mitatis.”

Table 1: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Pere II

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1280	Unspecified	Unspecified	Military expenses from a rebellion of Catalan nobles ^a	
1280	Unspecified part of 300,000 s.b. + 200,000 s.j. from all crown <i>aljamas</i>	Unspecified	Pardon for possible illicit usury ^b	
1282	Unspecified	500 s	Military expenses from campaign in Sicily; requested by Prince Alfons ^c	100 s to Morvedre
1282	25,000 s	Unspecified	Expenses stemming from the matter in Sicily; requested by Prince Alfons ^d	5,000 s to Kingdom ^e
1285	30,000 s	Unspecified	Military expenses for campaign against threatened French invasion of Catalonia ^f	
1285	30,000 s	Unspecified	Military expenses for campaign against threatened French invasion of Catalonia ^g	Stoppage of all procedure against individual Jews and <i>aljamas</i> for outstanding debts ^h

^a ACA: C 48: 7v (28 April 1280). T.N. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (Oxford, 1986), 86–87, treats the rebellion.

^b ACA: C 44: 183v–184r (24 June 1280).

^c ACA: C 59: 78v (2 September 1282); the remission; and C 59: 78r (1 September): the response of Alfons to the *aljama* of Valencia's complaint about the "violence" used by Cervia de Riera in collecting from the Jews the subsidy "quod petebamus vobis pro equis et victualibus que mittere intendemus domino Regi patri nostro."

^d ACA: C 59: 151v–152r (3 November 1282). The document reads "triginta mille solidorum" but the subsequent remissions to the *aljamas* of Valencia, Catalonia, and Aragon make it clear that the Valencian Jews' share was 25,000 sous. See also D. Romano, "El reparto del subsidio de 1282 entre las aljamas catalanas," *Sefarad*, 13 (1953), 74–75.

^e ACA: C 71: 129v (5 January 1283).

^f ACA: C 58: 87r (23 February 1285): "en subsidi de la dita armada . . . triginta mil solidos regales e quels aien posatz per tot lo dit mes de marz en la taula den G.A. cambiador de Valencia . . . Et misimus P. de Suria porterium ad compellendum dictos judeos pro solutione ipsorum denariorum."

^g ACA: C 56: 122v (6 June 1285); and C 58: 100r (2 July 1285). C 58: 107r (2 September 1285) shows that the second 30,000 sous came in slowly. C 66: 47r (23 April 1286), a letter of King Alfons to his servant Pere Escorna, shows that all 60,000 sous were finally paid, though first by the *aljama* of Valencia.

^h ACA: C 57: 180r, 180v–v (both dated 6 August 1285).

Table 2: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Alfons II

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1286	Unspecified part of unspecified sum collected from all crown <i>aljamas</i>	Unspecified	Confirmation and granting of royal privileges ^a	
1286	50,000 s	7,500 s	Unspecified subsidy (Mallorca campaign?) ^b	
1287	33,000 s	5,000 s	Unspecified subsidy (Minorca campaign?) ^c	11,000 s to Kingdom 3,000 s to Morvedre ^c Stoppage of all procedure against Jews and <i>aljamas</i> for outstanding debts ^d
1287	27,000 s in forced loans from nine individual Jews	2,000 s forced loan from Samuel Passarell	Unspecified (expenses for campaign against Aragonese Union?) ^e	
1289	6,000 s	900 s	Unspecified subsidy (royal embassy to Rome?) ^f	2,000 s to Kingdom 300 s to Morvedre ^f

^a ACA: C 70: 14r (13 November 1286). It is possible that the 150,000 sous b. that Valencian and Aragonese Jews were required to pay as a subsidy in 1286 were part of the “settlement” (*componitionem*) mentioned in this document.

^b ACA: C 66: 43v–44r (19 April 1286), 47r (23 April). Considering that in 1287 the Valencian *aljamas* were asked to provide one-third of the total combined subsidy sought from Aragonese and Valencian Jews, one can surmise that the contribution of Valencian Jews to the 1286 subsidy of 150,000 sous was 50,000 sous. The 1287 ratios also lead to the conclusion that the Jews of Morvedre paid fifteen percent of the 50,000 sous, or 7,500 sous, in 1286.

^c ACA: C 68: 58v (25 October 1287); C 71: 129v (14 January 1288). C 74: 2v (7 October 1287) commands the Jews of the kingdom to pay the expenses of the envoy Vidal Avençch; and 49v (30 December) includes two letters to Bernat de Ginebret instructing him to compel Jews of the *aljama* of Valencia, some of whom “sint et stent extra civitatem,” to pay their share of the taxes.

^d ACA: C 74: 2r (7 October 1287). Here Alfons was calling for the enforcement of Pere II’s 1285 measure (see Table 1). At the behest of creditors, *jurats* and justices throughout the kingdom had been penalizing local Jewish communities for their unpaid debts.

^e ACA: C 71: 49v (May 1287). The *aljama* probably reimbursed Passarell; see Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 98.

^f ACA: C 78: 71r (3 April 1289); Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 166.

and 1288, he and his father had nearly exhausted the reserves of the *aljamas* while furthering their goals in the Mediterranean. Of course, royal taxation had not left all Valencian Jews penniless—Samuel Passarell's "loan" to the crown in 1287 was as large as the entire subsidy rendered by his *aljama*. But communal funds were greatly depleted and there still were creditors to pay. Alfons could not expect the *aljamas'* creditors to remain unrequited indefinitely. The much smaller subsidy of 1289 gave the *aljamas* enough breathing room to repay their creditors while still making a contribution to the royal treasury.

When Jaume II (1291–1327) ascended the throne the royal treasury was already deeply in debt; this inherited debt and new foreign enterprises, which were even costlier than his predecessors', necessitated further alienation and mortgaging of the royal patrimony in the kingdom of Valencia.¹² In 1295 Jaume and Pope Boniface VIII affirmed the Treaty of Anagni. Jaume agreed to relinquish Sicily to the papacy; in return, the pope lifted all papal censures against the Crown of Aragon and rescinded the papal donation of the Crown to Charles of Valois. On better terms with the papacy and France, and taking advantage of the minority of Fernando IV of Castile, Jaume occupied most of the Castilian kingdom of Murcia in 1296, which ultimately led in 1304 to the annexation of a large part of Murcia to the kingdom of Valencia. In April 1297 Pope Boniface invested Jaume in Rome with the title to the kingdoms of Sardinia and Corsica, which the pope had held out as an inducement for Jaume's abandonment of Sicily. Boniface still expected Jaume to wrest Sicily from his brother, Frederic. Jaume therefore conducted a campaign against Sicily in 1298, but it was inconclusive and Frederic was able to retain possession of the island. The first two decades of the fourteenth century were more tranquil, with the important exception in 1309 of the failed siege of Nasrid Almería. By 1321, however, political circumstances were such that Jaume could make good his claim to Sardinia. After the king laboriously gathered men, materials, and money for the expedition, his forces defeated the Pisans and conquered the island in 1323–24. Sardinia continued to be a drain on the royal treasury, in large part because the rebellious Sards were none too happy with their new overlords.

¹² Sánchez, "Evolución," 402–403; and Furió, *Història*, 75–76.

Jaume II taxed the Jews heavily throughout his reign, though the fiscal burden became most onerous in the 1320s (see Table 3). The most substantial contributions to the Sardinia campaign indeed came from the Jewish and Muslim communities and from the main cities of the realm.¹³ By this juncture all royal measures intended to afford the Jews some relief must have appeared cruelly manipulative to Valencian Jews or, at best, ludicrous. In 1322, less than two years after freeing the Jews of the kingdom from extraordinary taxation for a period of four years, King Jaume unabashedly demanded an 80,000-sous subsidy from them while promising them yet another tax exemption.¹⁴ The “injurious words” Mossé Camiç, a Jew of Valencia, directed at the bailiff general probably expressed what he and his fellows throughout the kingdom thought of the new subsidy and the king’s promises. Hence all the Jewish *aljamas* asked the king to pardon Mossé from the penalty of two years in exile he had incurred.¹⁵

The tongue lashing Mossé Camiç inflicted on the bailiff general was one, rather atypical, Jewish response to the monarchy’s predatory taxation. The Jews usually reserved their spleen for each other. The crown’s fiscal regime had for some time been intensifying and transforming Jewish politics in the kingdom of Valencia, both between and within *aljamas*.

The Political Life of Royal Serfs

Royal requests for subsidies often put the *aljamas* of the kingdom at loggerheads with one another. During the reigns of Pere II and Alfons II, however, the disputes were apparently less serious, or perhaps the *aljamas* were more reluctant to air them before the royal authorities. The main cause of friction was the crown’s tendency to collect the entire subsidy from the *aljama* of Valencia, because of its

¹³ Sánchez, “Evolución,” 409; Y. Assis, “Jewish Capital and the Conquest of Sardinia by the Catalans,” *Italia*, 9 (1990), 14–15; Hillgarth, *Problem*, 30–34; and M.D. Cabanes Pecourt, “Valencia y Cerdeña: contribución económica para una conquista,” in *XIV Congresso di Storia della Corona d’Aragona: la Corona d’Aragona in Italia (secc. XIII–XVIII)*, 4 vols. (Sassari, 1995), 2: 131–134.

¹⁴ ACA: C 177: 33r–v (8 March 1322); and C 175: 259v–260r (18 July 1322). See also Table 3.

¹⁵ ACA: C 222: 54v (17 July 1322).

Table 3: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Jaume II

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1296	Unspecified	Unspecified	Expenses of upcoming royal trip to Rome for papal investiture with title to Sardinia and Corsica ^a	
1297	20,000 s	3,000 s	Expenses of royal trip to Rome ^b	5,000 s to Kingdom ^c
1298	20,000 s	3,000 s	Pardon for possible illicit usury ^d (expenses of expedition to Sicily?) ^e	
	10,000 s	1,500 s		
	Unspecified portion of 100,000 s.j. from all crown <i>aljamas</i>	Unspecified	^e	
1306	20,000 s	Unspecified	Expenses of marriage of Princess Constanza to Don Juan Manuel of Castile ^f	
1308	30,000 s	4,500 s (at least)	Expenses of crusade against Almería, sultanate of Granada ^g	
1309	30,000 s	4,500 s (at least) (3,631 s after remission?)	Expenses of crusade against Almería, sultanate of Granada ^h	19.3% to Kingdom ^h Three-year exemption from extraordinary taxation ⁱ Two-year stoppage of royal moratoria to the Jews' debtors ⁱ
1311	24,000 s	3,600 s (at least)	Liquidation of crown debts ^j	8,000 s to Kingdom 1,200 s to Morvedre ^j
1312	24,000 s	3,600 s (at least)	Subsidize dowries of Princesses Maria and Constanza ^j	8,000 s to Kingdom 1,200 s to Morvedre ^j
1313	30,000 s	4,500 s (at least)	"certain urgent causes" ^j	14,000 s to Kingdom 2,100 s to Morvedre ^j

1314	13,000 s	1,950 s (at least)	Unspecified ^k	
1315	7,000 s	1,050 s (at least)	Unspecified ^l	
1316	30,000 s	4,500 s (at least)	“certain urgent causes” ^j	17,000 s to Kingdom 2,547 s to Morvedre ^l
1317	30,000 s	4,500 s (at least)	“certain urgent causes” ^j	18,000 s to Kingdom 2,727 s to Morvedre ^l
1321	54,000 s	Unspecified	Crown purchase of the county of Urgell ^m	Five-year stoppage of royal moratoria to the Jews’ debtors ⁿ Four-year exemption from extraordinary taxation ^o
1322	80,000 s (of 500,000 s from all crown <i>aljamas</i>)	Unspecified	Expenses of conquest of Sardinia ^p	Two-year exemption from extraordinary taxation ^o
1324	Unspecified part of 200,000 s.b. from all crown <i>aljamas</i>	Unspecified	Expenses of government of Sardinia ^q	
1325		4,000 s fine (paid by recalcitrant taxpayers) 1,000 s fine (paid by <i>aljama</i>)	Refusal of sixteen families to pay taxes ^r	Remission of all further penalties
1325		16,400 s.b.	Subsidy to Prince Alfons for crown expenses in Sardinia ^s	
1325	15,000 s	Unspecified	Pardon for possible illicit usury ^t	
1326	Unspecified (probably 24,000 s)	Unspecified	Unspecified ^u	Five-year stoppage of royal investigations into Jewish moneylending Five-year stoppage of royal moratoria to the Jews’ debtors ^v
1325– 1326	Unspecified	Unspecified	Costs of lodging and feeding royal family and household in Valencia ^w	

Table 3 (*cont.*)

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1327	15,000 s + 1,000 s for the seal of the letter of “pardon”	Unspecified	Pardon for possible illicit usury ^a	
1327	33,000 s	Unspecified	Unspecified ^b	

^a ACA: C 104: 71v (4 September 1296). C 109: 195v–196r (5 August 1297) shows that subsidies were collected in both 1296 and 1297; unfortunately, the letter does not mention their size. C 115: 397r (19 April 1300) refers to the meetings of the board of *aljama* secretaries in 1296–97 for determining the division of the subsidies.

^b ACA: C 110: 52v (1 April 1298) notes that the Valencian *aljamas* paid 20,000 sous “in anno proxime preterito,” that is, 1297. I am assuming that Morvedre’s portion was, as in the reign of Alfons II, fifteen percent.

^c ACA: C 109: 206r (13 August 1297), the letter ordering the repayment of the admiral Ruggiero di Loria with the 15,000 sous collected from the *aljamas*, refers to a “facta remissione” of 5,000 sous, presumably made to the *aljamas*. Jaume had originally borrowed money from Loria for the Roman voyage.

^d ACA: C 196: 149v–150r (15 March 1298). C 110: 108r (13 April 1298) shows that 8,610 sous from this *compositio* were paid to four merchants from whom the crown had purchased wheat at Alacant. The king had in fact commanded the *aljamas* to promise, before a notary, to pay the merchants by mid-May 1298.

^e Y. Assis, “Jewish Capital and the Conquest of Sardinia by the Catalans,” *Italia*, 9 (1990), 13; and *idem*, *Jewish Economy*, 169–170.

^f ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2678 (27 May 1306) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 159]. CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2478 (27 July 1306) notes that the 1306 subsidy was “en ajuda de les messions del matremoni de la Infanta muller del noble en Johan Manuel.”

^g ACA: C 289: 35v (10 January 1308), and 57v, regarding the taxation of the Jews of Castelló, which specifies that the sum to be collected from all the kingdom’s Jews is 30,000 sous. Goñi Gaztambide, *Bula de la cruzada*, 265–81, on the Granadan crusade and preliminary negotiations.

^h P. Bertran Roige, “La fiscalidad extraordinaria de las aljamas judías de la Corona de Aragón (1309–1317),” *Sefarad*, 52 (1992), 307–308, 316–317; Assis, “Jewish Capital,” 13–14.

ⁱ ACA: C 206: 29v (25 April 1309) for the tax exemption, and 29v–30r (27 April) regarding the moratoria. Nor did King Jaume attempt to add to the number of ordinary taxes for which the Jews of the kingdom were liable. On the contrary, in March Jaume had ordered the collectors of the *monedatge* to desist from taxing the Jews after receiving verification from the *maestre racional*, Pere Boil, that the Jews had never paid the tax before (C 143: 103r [5 February 1309], 143v [12 March]).

^j The figures for 1311–13 and 1316–17 are derived from the data compiled by Bertran, “Fiscalidad extraordinaria,” 317–321, who draws upon ACA: C 326–327.

^k ACA: C 155: 260r–v (29 December 1314).

^l ACA: MR 278: 5r. It should be noted that for the years after 1312 royal fiscal registers distinguish between Valencian Jewish communities located north of the Xúquer River and those south of the Xúquer. The new organization was the result of the annexation of northern Murcia in 1304 and the incorporation of new Jewish communities, like Elx and Oriola, into the kingdom of Valencia. Yet, despite the designation of the Xúquer River as the dividing line between northern and southern Valencian *aljamas*, the *aljama* of Xàtiva continued to pay extraordinary taxes along with the northern communities. I have not included in the table the relatively small sums exacted from the southern *aljamas* after 1312, since their fiscal affairs were not intertwined with those of the Jews of Morvedre.

^m ACA: C 219: 167v–168r (30 November 1320). The subsidy was to be paid in two installments, the first in January 1321 and the second in May. The *aljamas* located north of Xixona were to pay the lion's share, 49,000 sous; the *aljamas* of Elx and Oriola were responsible for the remaining 5,000 sous.

ⁿ ACA: 217: 252v–253r. The king granted this stoppage first, on 21 January 1321, to the *aljama* of Zaragoza, acknowledging that “estis in tantum oppressi quod vix potestis ad tributa, violaria et alia subsidia exsolvenda sufficere.” The same letter was sent to the Valencian *aljamas* on 17 April and to various Catalan and Aragonese *aljamas* in the spring and summer months.

^o ACA: C 219: 185v (30 November 1320); the letter to the *aljama* of Tortosa (184v–185r) is the full version of the royal exemption.

^p ACA: C 222: 47r (7 July 1322), a letter to the Jews of Catalonia, states the total subsidy. C 177: 33r–v (8 March 1322), and C 175: 259v–260r (18 July) mention specifically the sums owed by Valencian Jews. C 371: 127r–v (13 September) notes that the *aljama* of Valencia was responsible for 33,000 of the 80,000 sous. See also Assis, “Jewish Capital,” 15–16, especially for Catalonia.

^q ACA: C 180: 187r (15 October 1323) discusses the subsidy in reference to Valencian Jewry. ACA: MR 291: 19v (25 June 1325) records the receipt of 16,351 sous 2 diners from some Aragonese *aljamas*. The portion of the 200,000 sous incumbent on the Valencian *aljamas* is not specified, but C 180: 181v (10 October 1323) notes that the Jewish communities in the southern part of the kingdom were responsible for 11,000 sous b. alone. The other Valencian communities must have paid some 60,000 to 70,000 sous.

^r ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 91 (2 April 1325), copied in ACA: C 373: 99r: “aliqui singulares judie Muriveteris teneantur Curie Regie solvere quatuor mille solidos regalium juxta declarationem factam per dictum dominum Regem, pro eo quia eorum manifestaciones infra tempus eis assignatum facere recusaverunt.” C 373: 130r (16 April 1325) notes that sixteen Jews were penalized. ACA: MR 291: 10v (20 April 1325) records the receipt of the 4,000 sous. CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 97 (14 May 1325) is the remission.

^s ACA: C 375: 89v–90r (7 May 1325).

^t ACA: C 228: 120v–121r (1 July 1325).

^u ACA: C 189: 201r (20 August 1326); and C 376: 211r–v (31 May 1326), where Prince Alfons mentions “presenti subsidio per nos ipsis aljamis imposito.” CR Jaume II, caixa 135, no. 394 (16 February [1327]) suggests that the subsidy of 1326 was 24,000 sous, for in 1327 the Jews of Valencia compared this smaller amount to the 33,000 sous Valencian Jewry was then being asked to render.

^v ACA: C 228: 107r (15 May 1326) regarding usury investigations; and 108r–v regarding the moratoria.

^w ACA: C 373: 65r–v (23 February 1325) treats the complaint of the *aljama* of Valencia that “specialiter aljama judeorum Muriveteris que in logerio lectorum et superlectilium que domesticis nostris dum curia nostra in civitate Valencie presens est traduntur per dictam aljamam Valencie non vult immo penitus recusat solvere partem suam.” CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 165 (27 May 1326), copied in C 189: 13v, is a similar accusation against the *aljama* of Xàtiva.

^x ACA: C 190: 27r (17 March 1327). The cost of the “sigilli carte gratie” was also to be divided up among the Valencian *aljamas* “pro rata.” This of course violated his promise of 1326.

^y ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 135, no. 394 (16 February [1327]) The letter must date from 1327, since Joan Escribà did not serve as bailiff general before that year. It cannot be determined whether King Jaume took Escribà's advice and granted some form of remission.

size, wealth, and convenient location in the capital. This community would then have to wait until the other *aljamas* reimbursed it; complaints to the king and royal coercion were occasionally required before it was satisfied.¹⁶ The *aljamas* also haggled over how they ought to requite the envoys each community had sent to King Pere to discuss fiscal matters.¹⁷ If disagreement over such a minor issue could arise among the Valencian *aljamas* alone, small surprise that the attempt of Alfons II in 1286 to have both the Valencian and the Aragonese *aljamas* negotiate the apportionment of a royal subsidy was not repeated.¹⁸

The policies of Pere II and Alfons II significantly affected the conduct of politics in the *jueria* of Morvedre. Prior to the 1280s relations between the powerful families and between them and humbler Jews had been, to all appearances, placid. Attention to official duties had kept the influential Alconstantini and Avinçaprut families out of each other's way, while other affluent Jews, their potential competitors, had lacked a strong motive for challenging them. Furthermore, the "class struggles" plaguing some of the Aragonese *aljamas* by the

¹⁶ ACA: C 46: 152v (11 January 1284): "Mandamus vobis quatenus, visis presentibus, faciatis compelli aliamas judeorum Xative et Muriveteris ad solvendum aliame judeorum Valencie quacunque pro ipsis solverint in aliquibus exaccionibus nostris vel . . . primogeniti nostris Infantis Alfonsi aut missionibus aut aliis quibuscumque juxta taxaciones eorum." ACA: C 57: 222v (22 October 1285); C 66: 47r (23 April 1286); and C 67: 80v (21 September 1286) are other examples.

¹⁷ ACA: C 56: 7v (22 February 1285): King Pere ordains that all the Jews of the kingdom should jointly (*comuniter*) repay the envoys of all the *aljamas*, and that each Jew's contribution should be computed on the basis of his declaration, under oath, of his assets (*per solidum et per libram*). Yet, according to Jews from Xàtiva, some Jews were asserting that each *aljama* ought to pay the expenses of its own envoys. The Jews who objected to the king's method were probably the wealthy and powerful in each community who preferred that community-appointed assessors, favorable to their interests, determine the responsibility of each community member. This Pere understood; so he ordered the *aljamas* of Morvedre, Valencia, and Xàtiva to follow his instructions (C: 56: 107r [24 May 1285]).

¹⁸ An accord between the Aragonese and Valencian Jews on the division of the 150,000-sous b. subsidy, first requested in April 1286 (ACA: C 66: 43v–44r), was still not reached by August. King Alfons therefore ordered the Valencian *aljamas* to provide him with 15,000 sous b. in the meantime (C 67: 57r–v [17 August]). There is no further direct evidence of an agreement between the Valencian and Aragonese Jews, but only a general royal order that in the future, whenever King Alfons seeks "subsidies or other royal exactions," the Jews of the kingdom of Valencia will be obliged to contribute along with Aragonese Jewry "per solidum et per libram vel juxta tributa secundum magis elegerint predicti judei Aragonum" (C 64: 128r [21 September 1286]). It seems, however, that this method of determining the fiscal responsibilities of Valencian *aljamas* was not utilized subsequently.

1260s had not erupted in Morvedre.¹⁹ Of course, until around 1270 the Jewish population in Morvedre had probably not possessed either the size or the socioeconomic diversity to have allowed for the formation of class consciousness among poorer Jews. Most importantly, before 1280 royal taxation had been rather light; hence there had been no great cause round which the poor might have rallied, no compelling reason for Jews to have scrutinized the economic situation of their fellows.

The political situation changed dramatically when King Pere began, in 1280, to squeeze the Valencian *aljamas* for revenue, and when he agreed, in 1283, to the permanent removal of Jewish bailiffs. The latter measure forced the Alconstantinis and the Avinçapruts to abandon their dreams of rising high in the royal administration and to concentrate their energies on achieving success through other means in Morvedre.²⁰ The two families did not clash immediately but actually formed a “society” for farming the kingdom’s *herbatge* tax in 1284. The partnership unfortunately failed. In 1285 Salamó Alconstantini sued Jucef Avinçaprut and his brother Salamó for the 2,000 sous they allegedly owed him from this venture. Because crown revenue was involved, King Pere pardoned Alconstantini for having illegally filed suit against another Jew outside a Jewish court. The Avinçapruts nonetheless seized on this irregularity to claim that Thomàs Vives, the local justice assigned to the case, was biased against them. The presence of Salamó Avinçaprut at the royal court on *aljama* business ensured that the appeal did not fall on deaf ears. The king ordered Vives to halt his procedure.²¹ The 2,000 sous long remained a sore point between the two families. Litigation dragged on until at least 1289.

¹⁹ Y. Assis, “Social Unrest and Class Struggle in Jewish Communities in Spain before the Expulsion,” [Hebrew] in *Culture and History* [Hebrew], ed. J. Dan (Jerusalem, 1987), 121–125, 131–133, for the Aragonese situation.

²⁰ Y. Assis, “Poor and Rich in Jewish Society in Mediterranean Spain,” [Hebrew] *Pe’amim*, 46–47 (1991), 131–132; *idem*, “Social Unrest,” 127–128; and *idem*, *Golden Age*, 16–17, emphasizes the importance of the 1283 legislation for *aljama* politics throughout crown lands.

²¹ ACA: C 43: 114r (26 January 1285); see chap. 1, n. 134, for the transcription. C 56: 77r (22 April 1285), in which it is stated that the Avinçapruts “habent ipsam justiciam pro suspecto.” The order to Vives, “quod supersedeatis procedere in petitionibus que de novo proponantur contra Salomonem Avinçapruh per aliquos judeos dicti loci dum idem Salomon in curia domini regis fuerit pro *aljama* judeorum Muriveteris,” is on the same folio and of the same date.

Families as influential as the Alconstantinis and the Avinçapruts could easily recruit followers among the local Jews. "Some Jews" joined Alconstantini in 1285 in filing charges in Vives's court against the Avinçapruts. In 1289 Bahiel, the son of Salamó Alconstantini, complained that "some Jews of Morvedre" were violating royal privileges disallowing Jewish suits against coreligionists in Christian courts by leveling many accusations (*multipliciter violanda*) against his family before the Christian authorities. These delators may well have been allies of the Avinçapruts, who themselves hoped to block the Alconstantinis' rather hypocritical reactivation of the case of the 2,000 sous before King Alfons. To his credit, the king asked the *adelantats* of Valencia to render a final decision.²²

Even though these legal battles were likely part of a wider struggle between the two families for preeminence in the *aljama*, the main challenge each one ultimately faced in this regard came not from the opposing family but from the rest of the community. After Jewish courtiers and officials were denied access to royal government in 1283, many Jews in Morvedre felt that they no longer had to defer to the authority of the Avinçapruts and the Alconstantinis. Growing fiscal pressure from the monarchy made them extremely resentful of the privileges and tax exemptions the former bailiffs and their families enjoyed. Vague charges of tax fraud and the reluctance of *aljama* officials to surrender their account books to the king for inspection attest to the strain the community was experiencing by 1284 under King Pere's much harsher fiscal regime.²³

Jews in Morvedre employed a variety of tactics to cut the Alconstantinis and the Avinçapruts down to size, some confrontational, others more surreptitious. In 1290, for instance, the sons of Bahiel Alconstantini protested after "certain Jews of Morvedre" tore up the letters of privilege their grandfather Salamó had received from Jaume I.²⁴ The *aljama* had already refused four years earlier to pay Jucef Avinçaprut

²² Regarding 1285, see n. 21. ACA: C 80: 5r-v (8 July 1289), two documents. In 5v it is noted that Jews who violate the privilege "quod non possit se clamare de judeo" are to incur a monetary penalty of 1,000 *morabatins*. There is no further information on how the *adelantats* of Valencia ruled after receiving the order of King Alfons (5r).

²³ See n. 10.

²⁴ ACA: C 81: 10v (3 January 1290): "Raymundo Scorna, quod procedat contra quosdam judeos de Muroveteri qui fregerunt, ut dicitur, filiis de Baffiel quedam privilegia eisdem judeis concessa per dominum regem Jacobum, confirmata per dominum regem Petrum."

the 120-sous stipend he had been collecting from it annually by virtue of an award of the same king.²⁵ By the summer of 1290 Avinçaprut and the *aljama* were again lodging formal “complaints” against each other.²⁶ At the same time, information was leaked to the royal court that some Jewish estate owners were selling the produce from their lands outside of Morvedre in an effort to avoid taxation. Few local Jews owned as much property as the Alconstantinis and the Avinçapruts, and none had more reason to whisper such denunciations than the Jews intent on having them pay more taxes. The informers got what they wanted: royal letters ordering the municipal justice to take appropriate action.²⁷

The opponents of the Alconstantinis and Avinçapruts were not just, or even primarily, lower- and middle-class Jewish taxpayers. Rather, among them and probably leading them—sometimes identified in royal letters as “the *aljama*”—were affluent Jews, Jews from families who could not claim special privileges, Jews who fulfilled their fiscal responsibilities to the community and thereby gained its goodwill and support.²⁸ A family of well-to-do moneylenders, the Passarells, spearheaded the assault on the privileged families. And for good reason: while Jucef Avinçaprut lived tax-free, Samuel Passarell rendered a forced loan of 2,000 sous to King Alfons in 1287.²⁹ In 1295 “Isaac Passarell and the *aljama*” engaged Jucef Avinçaprut in various lawsuits.³⁰ One of them concerned Jucef’s entitlement to the 120-sous

²⁵ The 120 sous were taken from the *aljama*’s annual royal tribute. The *aljama*’s recalcitrance earned it a brusque command from King Alfons—ACA: C 66: 113v (5 June 1286).

²⁶ ACA: C 81: 178r (1 September 1290): “Causa inter Juceffum Avinseprut, judeum Muriveteris, ex una parte, et aljamam judeorum Muriveteris ex altera super querimoniis quas unus movere intendit contra alium fuit comissa G. de Sancta Maria jurisperito Muriveteris.”

²⁷ ACA: C 81: 171r (25 August 1290): “Justicie Muriveteris, quod vendat de fructibus judeorum qui absentaverunt se a predicto loco et fraudulenter vendiderunt fructus hereditatum suarum, ut non possent compelli ad contribuendum in questiis et talliis quolibet anno, quod sufficiant ad quantitates eos contingentes in dictis questiis et talliis et ipsas quantitates tradat in solutionem dictarum questiarum aljame judeorum Muriveteris.” This order would not have affected Jucef Avinçaprut since he had a personal lifetime exemption from royal taxes; the exemption, however, did not extend to other members of his family. The Alconstantinis, though possessing certain “privileges,” had not been granted such a blanket exemption.

²⁸ See the general comments of Assis, “Poor and Rich,” 120.

²⁹ ACA: C 71: 49v.

³⁰ ACA: C 89: 54r (4 January 1295): “causis que vertuntur vel verti sperantur inter Jucefum Avinçaprut ex una parte et Açach Passareyl et aliamam judeorum Muriveteris ex altera.”

stipend. In 1286 Jucef had ceded the stipend to Isaac through a fictitious bill of sale, in order to placate the *aljama* which was then unwilling to pay it to Jucef directly. However, Isaac, the *aljama*'s man, tricked Jucef: for the next eight years he collected the stipend from the *aljama* and never transferred it to Jucef. Considering the large sums the Passarell family alone gave King Alfons, other members of the community probably did not mind that Isaac kept the stipend. Cowed by communal opposition, Jucef tolerated this state of affairs until he really needed the money.³¹

The enemies of Jucef Avinçaprut in the *aljama* never succeeded in depriving him of his fiscal exemptions and privileges. Time and fortune, however, were on their side. By 1302 Jucef was dead; he left no sons to inherit his privileges. His brother Salamó survived him a few years, but neither he nor his relative Abraham contended for power in the *aljama*.³² The Alconstantinis were not as easily gotten rid of, and there were more of them: grandfather Salamó, his sons Bahiel and Bonet, and his grandson Bahiel. Still, the persistent opposition of rivals bold enough to rip up their letters of privilege wore them down. Rather than butt heads with the likes of the Passarells, the Bonets, and the Coffes, in 1307 they returned whence they had

³¹ ACA: C 89: 57v (18 January 1295): "Petro Mir baiulo Muriveteris. Intelleximus per Juçephum Avinçaprut judeum quod cum ipse ex concessione illustrissimi domini regis Jacobi bone memorie, avi nostri, deberet recipere quolibet anno CXX solidos super tributo judeorum Muriveteris, Açach Passarel fraudulenter ratione renditionis [sic] ei facte per dictum Juçephum exegit et recepit dictos CXX solidos ab octo annos citra et ipsos restituere et solvere dicto Juçepho indebite contradicit, licet ipse Açach, interrogatus per sacramentum, confessus fuerit instrumentum dicte venditionis fecte factum fuisse et non ex pura venditione." The bailiff was commanded to compel Isaac to give the money to Jucef, unless he learned of a reason for another course of action. As for Jucef's needs for funds at this juncture, it is worth noting that he died in debt to the crown.

³² ACA: C 199: 14r (15 January 1302) states that "nullus inveniretur heres dicti judei [Jucef]," a surprising assertion in light of his brother Salamó's survival. However, given Jucef's debts to the crown, Jaume II found it convenient to ignore any possible claims of Salamó and magnanimously to free the noble Bellpuig family from its debts to Jucef. ARV: P 2811, J. Martí: 35r (6 May 1299), which concerns arbitration of a dispute between Jucef and one Martí d'Ayora, is the last reference I have seen to a still living Jucef. ACA: C 289: 82r (14 August 1308) is the last reference to his brother Salamó, who here is listed as one of the guarantors of Samuel Xibili, a local Jew accused of furtively taking another Jew's mule and selling it or losing it gambling in Valencia. The most notable accomplishment of Abraham Avinçaprut, alias "Corla," seems to have been the murder of Gento Escapa, an otherwise unknown Jew of Morvedre, for which he was heavily fined (ACA: C 138: 184r [18 April 1306]).

come, to Zaragoza. Other Jews immediately and happily occupied their seats in the synagogue, which no doubt were front and center.³³

The main beneficiaries of the departure of the Avinçapruts and the Alconstantinis were the affluent moneylending and tax farming families: the Passarells, the Coffes, the Bonets, the Ballesters, the Maymós, the Aldectoris, the Algehens, and the Aborrabes. Through at least the first quarter of the fourteenth century these families shared the control of *aljama* government by holding at different times one of the three posts of *adelantat* or “secretary.” The *adelantats* directed communal government, performing executive, legislative, fiscal, and judicial functions. The offices usually changed hands annually, though it was possible to be reelected as *adelantat*. There was also an advisory council the members of which were recruited from the leading families.³⁴

In terms of lifestyle and economic status, these ruling families differed little from the Avinçapruts and the Alconstantinis. The sources of their power and authority, however, were distinct. The sort of power held by families like the Alconstantinis, originating in royal office and its perquisites, had set them above and almost removed them from the community, which, as has been seen, came to take umbrage at their flaunting of privilege. Families like the Passarells and the Coffes were, in contrast, very much part of the community. They obtained their wealth through their own labor and investments, not from royal awards. Their power derived in great measure from their satisfaction of fiscal responsibilities to the community, not from royal privileges. The major taxpayers won social respect, power, and the posts of *adelantat* because the Jewish community’s ability to subsidize the monarchy—its *raison d’être* in the eyes of many kings—was increasingly essential to its security and enjoyment of specific “rights.” Instead of depending on a few influential Jewish officials to pull

³³ ACA: C 141: 205r (6 February 1308): the four Alconstantinis plea “quod cum ipsi transtulerint domicilium suum apud civitatem Cesarauguste et habent in sinagoga judeis constituta in loco de Muroveteri quatuor quatedras sive sehillas, aliqui dictorum judeorum dicti loci de Muroveteri diviserunt inter se dictas katedras seu sehillas ipsasque sibi appropriarunt et retinent contra voluntatem predictorum conquerentium in eorum preiudicium et gravamen.” The Alconstantinis were concerned not because they planned to return to Morvedre, but because synagogue seats were valuable and could be sold (Assis, *Golden Age*, 217).

³⁴ A *responsum* of Rabbi Shelomo ben Adret (d. 1310) provides the earliest evidence of an *aljama* council in Morvedre—*She’elot u-Teshuvot* (Bene Barak, 1957), vol. 3, no. 428. See also Baer, *History*, 1: 219.

strings on its behalf at the royal court, the community's survival now hinged much more on its collective contributions to the king's treasury. The community was now most beholden to the families who contributed the most to its royal subsidies and so accorded them prestige and power.

Among a people whose relationship with the monarchy depended so much on its fiscal value, social power was bound to inhere to an unusual degree—by contemporary Christian and Muslim standards—in the manipulation and amassing of monetary resources. Although Jews sometimes traded blows and feuded with coreligionists, they could not, given their sociopolitical position and the career paths closed to them, link high social status to the exercise of arms in the way that Christians did. Rival Jewish families might perpetrate reciprocal acts of violence while competing for prestige in the eyes of the Jewish community, but since Jewish feuds had no resonance outside of the Jewish quarter and no significant bearing on how the monarchy treated Jews or on how Christians viewed them, the Jews could not in a thoroughgoing fashion base honor and aristocratic status on martial prowess. If there were no Jewish analogues to Christian knighthood, it was not because Jews did not engage in socially meaningful violence among themselves but because they were not permitted to employ violence in a way that could alter their position or shape their destiny as “Jews” in the wider society.³⁵

Even the subject Muslims correlated martial prowess and social prestige more than their Jewish contemporaries. Feuding was integral to the life of a Muslim population which once held the reins of political power and which remained, because of its demographic

³⁵ One might say that due to their peculiar sociopolitical position in a Christian kingdom, the Jews' concept of honor had already begun to change “in the direction of spiritualization,” a shift remarked on by P. Spierenburg with regard to Christian Europeans in the early modern period in “Masculinity, Violence, and Honor: An Introduction,” in *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*, ed. P. Spierenburg (Columbus, 1998), 6. Spierenburg points out that as the “element of force” was reduced or removed, “economic solidity” became “a major supplementary source of honor for men.” This change in the Jews' conception of honor, however, was by no means thoroughgoing. In fact, as a result of institutional and economic developments, in the fifteenth century Morvedre's Jewish families engaged more frequently in blood feuds and behaved more like Valencian Christians. See Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 5; and *idem*, “The Murder of Pau de Sant Martí: Jews, *Conversos*, and the Feud in Fifteenth-Century Valencia,” in *“A Great Effusion of Blood”? Interpreting Medieval Violence*, ed. M.D. Meyerson, O. Falk, D. Thierry (Toronto, 2004).

presence and its habitual association of political sovereignty with religious faith, a kind of state within the state, a self-conscious remnant of the *dâr al-Islâm* perforce resident in the *dâr al-ḥarb*, “the abode of war.” The Mudejars, moreover, sometimes performed military service for their Christian overlords.³⁶ Their economic importance to the monarchy and the Christian aristocracy hinged less on their tax-paying prowess than on constituting the agricultural substratum of the kingdom’s economy. True, individual Muslims rendered rents and dues to their lords and occasionally substantial aggregate sums to the crown, but Muslims were rarely under the kind of pressure which forced Jewish communities and Jewish moneymen to locate and cough up vast subsidies rapidly. Among the Mudejars being a major taxpayer never had the same social cachet it acquired among the Jews, because for the Mudejars rendering taxes to the king was never deemed a service quite so fundamental to the community’s survival.

Religious learning and piety were also esteemed attributes, though in a Jewish community like the one in Morvedre, which seems never to have been graced by the presence of widely admired scholars and rabbis, there was no obvious opposition between the religious authority of the *hakham*, or sage, and the secular authority of the affluent oligarch. The two sources of power, the religious and the economic, were more complementary than contradictory; religious learning, material wealth, and political authority tended to reside in the same families. The sons of affluent families must have received a reasonably good education in Torah and Talmud, and some were no doubt “pious” by contemporary criteria.³⁷ They required such an education in order to perform properly their duties as *adelantats*, which included adjudicating, as *dayanim*, disputes between Jews according to Jewish law, punishing flagrant infringements of the law, and drafting and enforcing communal legislation which met halakhic standards. Usually portrayed in royal correspondence as mired in fiscal politics, these leading families could not have clung to power so long and

³⁶ J. Boswell, *The Royal Treasure: Muslim Communities under the Crown of Aragon in the Fourteenth Century* (New Haven, 1977), 171–193 on Mudejar military service; and Meyerson, *Muslims of Valencia*, chap. 6, on Mudejar feuding.

³⁷ See Assis, *Golden Age*, 328–329, on the difficulties of poor children in getting an elementary education. The creation of a society for this purpose seems not to have occurred in Morvedre until later in the fourteenth century.

commanded the respect of their fellows without paying something more than lip service to standards of religious observance and education.

The ruling families had not struggled with the Avinçapruts and the Alconstantinis in order to open up communal government to representation from the lower classes. Albeit manned by more responsible individuals, *aljama* government in Morvedre remained oligarchic. It was probably very much like the system existing before 1300 in the *aljama* of Valencia, where the executive officials in charge of tax assessment and collection were selected from a list of wealthy candidates.³⁸ In 1300 rumblings from the “middle and lower” classes brought about reforms in the *aljama* of Valencia which gave them a role in tax assessment.³⁹ Not so in Morvedre, however, where the lower classes were neither sufficiently numerous nor organized to agitate loudly and successfully.

There was discontent in Morvedre nonetheless. In 1297, for instance, the *adelantats* sought the assistance of the municipal justice in compelling “objectors and rebels” to pay their taxes. As the *aljama* was at that juncture being asked to provide its share of a 20,000-sous subsidy on top of its recent “loan” of 3,500 sous to the king, the rebels may well have come from all socioeconomic strata. The *adelantats* from Morvedre indeed protested loudly on behalf of their whole community when the other members of the board of secretaries representing the kingdom’s *aljamas*, which had convened to divide up the 1297 subsidy, refused to take into account Morvedre’s sizeable loan to the crown in determining its portion of the subsidy.⁴⁰ Still,

³⁸ Assis, “Poor and Rich,” 119–120.

³⁹ Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: 167–169, no. 146; *idem*, *History*, 1: 230–231; and Assis, “Social Unrest,” 133.

⁴⁰ ACA: C 108: 133r–v (3 July 1297) is King Jaume’s response to the complaint of the *aljama* of Morvedre regarding the loan and the decisions of the board. Jaume decided that the loan would, in effect, become the subsidy payment of the *aljama* of Morvedre, and if it happened that the loan was larger than the portion decided on by the board, then the *aljama* of Valencia would pay the Morvedre community the difference between the loan and its portion of the subsidy. The loan may well have been larger than the *aljama*’s portion of the subsidy, which, if it was fifteen percent of the 20,000-sous subsidy, would have been 3,000 sous. C 108: 133v (same date) discusses the “aliqui judei ipsius aljame [who] differunt et contradicunt solvere in peytis seu subsidiis que ab ipsa aljama usque nunc exigi mandavimus.” They are later labeled “contradicentes et rebelles.” Interestingly enough, the Christians of Morvedre were at the same time resisting collectors of the *monedatge* with arms (C 108: 26v) and, according to the archdeacon of Morvedre, withholding first-fruits and other ecclesiastical *jura* (C 108: 104v).

poorer Jews would have felt the bite of this potential double subsidy more deeply. Even if there was no clearly articulated class consciousness among Jews of middling and lesser wealth, under the relentless fiscal pressure of the monarchy its development was inevitable. Pondering whether the *adelantats* were taxing them fairly, all Jewish families necessarily became conscious of their economic standing vis-à-vis other families. All wondered who was paying too much and who too little, and all judged the *adelantats* as either just or oppressive, friendly or inimical.

The oligarchs of the *aljama* of Morvedre managed until 1308 to delay instituting the *per sou e lliura* system of tax assessment which King Jaume had imposed on the *aljama* of Valencia in 1300. Instead of the *adelantats* deciding arbitrarily how much in taxes each household should render, according to the *per sou e lliura* plan, each Jewish householder's fiscal contribution was computed on the basis of his (or her) declaration, under oath, of his (or her) assets. Wealthier families usually disliked this plan because it often resulted in their carrying a heavier tax load. The oligarchs in Morvedre no doubt resisted it for the same reason, but their objections were rooted in a concern to defend community as well as class interests. They had in fact championed their community in its wrangles with the other *aljamas* over the course of the previous decade.

After 1297 Morvedre and the other *aljamas* negotiated or quarreled practically every year over the apportionment and payment of royal subsidies.⁴¹ To avoid the annual haggling, the communities' representatives reached in 1303 what appeared to be a relatively long-term agreement. It stipulated that of any extraordinary tax levied during the next four years the *aljama* of Valencia would be liable

⁴¹ In 1298 the *aljama* of Valencia initially paid the entire royal subsidy for the sake of expediency. Its officials had to obtain royal assistance to compel the other Jewish communities to requite it (ACA: C 110: 52v [1 April 1298], two letters). ACA: CR Alfonso II, Ex. S., no. 131 [transcribed in *The Jews in the Crown of Aragon Regesta of the "Cartas Reales" in the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. M. Cinta Mañé and G. Escribà (Jerusalem, 1993), 15–25] refers to fiscal negotiations the following year. Entry XXII refers to “lo pleyt que huiem [*aljama* of Valencia] ab la *aljama* de Murvedre e del regne,” and entry LIII refers to “lo pleyt auiem als jueus del recne.” In ACA: C 115: 396v (15 April 1300) King Jaume calls for a meeting of the board of secretaries from the various Valencian *aljamas* to decide on the apportionment of the subsidy. C 115: 397r (19 April 1300) treats a complaint of the *aljama* of Valencia that some Jews of Castelló, part of its *collecta*, are moving elsewhere to avoid their fiscal responsibilities.

for one-third and the other *aljamas* for two-thirds. But this agreement proved to be unsatisfactory from the start. Only five months after its ratification the Jews of Xàtiva complained that because royal taxation had left them so indigent, they could not pay their portion of the extraordinary tax imposed on Valencian Jewry that year. They had no choice but to renege on the accord and thereby incur a fine payable to the king.⁴² The financial outlook of *aljama* officials in Valencia was significantly altered a short while later by the 16,000-sous fine the king exacted from their community for having illicitly enlarged a synagogue.⁴³ In collecting contributions from community members toward payment of the fine, the officials looked to recent emigrants to Morvedre who still held synagogue seats and property in Valencia.⁴⁴ Turning to Morvedre made good sense, for its *aljama* continued to fare rather well, at least in comparison to the *aljamas* of Xàtiva and Valencia. In 1305 representatives from the *aljama* of Morvedre pointed out to the king that for the past four years it had been paying more than its share of royal subsidies in order to compensate for other Jewish communities which could not pay their portions fully. The Jews of Morvedre wanted some remuneration.⁴⁵

The following year communal leaders from Morvedre and other *aljamas* partially defeated the proposal of the *aljama* of Valencia that all the kingdom's Jewish communities pay jointly not just extraordinary subsidies but also ordinary taxes and tributes (*lo traut e la cena*),

⁴² ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 135, no. 381 (n.d.). The document almost certainly dates from 1303, since ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2678 (27 May 1306) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 159] states that the four-year agreement is now in its fourth year. ACA: C 134: 163r (5 December 1304) further evinces the financial difficulties of the *aljama* of Xàtiva. The letter concerns the complaint of Vidal Avincayl of Lleida, who was owed 1,700 sous by the Valencian *aljamas* for expenses he had incurred negotiating with the crown. Vidal pointed out that some Valencian Jews were not cooperating, "specialiter judei Xative."

⁴³ The *aljama* therefore immediately borrowed heavily from affluent Christian citizens of the capital. ACA: C 134: 192v (25 December 1304) is the grant of a one year *elongamentum* to the *aljama* of Valencia on the payment of its debts, except the 16,000 sous "ad quam [quantitatem] se pro nobis obligarunt [the Jews] Andree Parenços, civi Valencie"; and 219v (4 February 1305) enjoins officials to observe it. C 136: 229v (22 September 1305) shows that the *aljama* had borrowed 6,500 sous from Elicsenda, the widow of Benedict de Villalba, citizen of Valencia.

⁴⁴ ACA: C 135: 92r-v (23 June 1305). Recent emigrants to Morvedre like Bonjuhà Saladi complained because the *aljama* of Valencia was taxing them not only for the property they still held in Valencia but also for that which they had acquired in Morvedre since their move there.

⁴⁵ ACA: C 136: 212r (5 September 1305).

and that they do so according to a *per sou e lliura* scheme. They thought that such a joint payment plan would reduce their autonomy, challenge their own methods of internal assessment for ordinary taxes, and leave them and their constituents liable for more taxes. They objected further that, consistent with a ruling of Jaume I, their communities had never paid ordinary taxes in conjunction with the *aljama* of Valencia. They did not wish to be linked to the Jews of Valencia in this way because they did not trust them (*com se dubtassen d'ells*). As far as ordinary taxation was concerned, the Jewish leaders from outside the capital won their point. Their counterparts from Valencia nonetheless managed to persuade the king to divide the subsidy of 1306 in a manner slightly more favorable to their community.⁴⁶

In 1307 the *aljama* of Valencia got its way. King Jaume instituted a *per sou e lliura* plan for all the *aljamas* of the kingdom of Valencia which would regulate the assessment and collection of all taxes, extraordinary and ordinary.⁴⁷ Now the officials in each community would receive every householder's written declaration of assets and, on the basis of the declaration, determine the individual householder's fiscal contribution. Local officials would then deliver all the declarations and assessments to the capital. There the board of secretaries representing all the *aljamas* (there were nine secretaries in 1309–10) would review and confirm the assessments of the kingdom's householders,

⁴⁶ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2678 (27 May 1306) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 159]. According to the new partition, the Jews of Valencia would pay 6,000 sous—666 sous less than they would have paid according to the 1303 agreement—and the rest of the kingdom's Jews 14,000 sous. Within the framework of this general apportionment, a board of seven Jews from the kingdom's *aljamas* was assigned the task of valuating the assets of individual Jews, coercing those who refused to reveal their assets, and even extracting something from poor artisans who possessed no assets to speak of. This was a partial and cumbersome *per sou e lliura* system, incomplete because some *aljamas*, like Morvedre, had not yet instituted such a system internally. CR Jaume II, caixa 21, no. 2748 (27 July 1306) is a letter of Bernat de Llibià, bailiff general, to Bernat d'Aversó, royal scribe, expressing his concern that the queen was having the subsidy collected in a different manner. Llibià was anxious that “la juheria de Valencia es e sera mes destruyda e despoblada si la dita ordenacio no es observada.”

⁴⁷ ACA: C 139: 176v (7 March 1307): “per privilegium nostrum statuerimus et ordinaverimus quod judei dicti regni in tributis, peytis et aliis exaccionibus solvant per solidum et per libram.” C 139: 177r–v (5 March 1307) orders the bailiff general to see to it that the Jews of the kingdom contribute to the *cenis* paid to the king by the *aljama* of Valencia and to the expenses incurred by nuncios of the *aljama* who were sent to the royal court “pro negociis comunibus” of the kingdom's Jews.

and, on that basis, decide precisely how the burden of ordinary and especially extraordinary taxes was to be distributed among the communities. Local *aljama* officials, working in conjunction with royal tax collectors, would be responsible for collecting the taxes.⁴⁸

The *aljama* of Morvedre objected to the new plan. Its representatives were conspicuously absent when the board of secretaries convened at the behest of the bailiff general in June 1307.⁴⁹ The *aljama*'s protest had less to do with the will of its wealthy and powerful members to continue to control communal taxation completely—though this too was a significant motive—than with the recognition of all its members of any means that the new fiscal system would result in higher taxes for them. Compared to the struggling *aljama* of Xàtiva, or to the *aljama* of Valencia, which had repeatedly borne the brunt of royal taxation, the Morvedre community had been escaping rather lightly.

The protest of the *aljama* of Morvedre was a vain gesture. Keen to exploit the assets of his Jewish subjects with greater accuracy and efficiency, King Jaume demanded that his “privilege” be “completely observed . . . notwithstanding any opposition made by the Jews of Morvedre.”⁵⁰ In 1308, in order to ensure that the *aljama* of Morvedre

⁴⁸ Evidence as to the functioning of this system is contained in ACA: C 142: 62r–v (16 June 1308), in which Bonafilla, the widow of Ruben Lupell of Morvedre, complains that the “albaranum sue extimationis” was mistakenly placed by the board of secretaries with the *albaranos* of the *aljama* of Valencia; and C 290: 102v (5 March 1310), in which Jucef Algehen of Morvedre complains that local communal secretaries taxed him excessively “ultra sumam albarani sui quod nonem secretarii dicti regni generales receperant et assumaverant et ipsum pro sufficiente habuerat [sic] una cum aliis albaranis judeorum dicti loci.” Jucef’s complaint is probably in reference to the previous year, 1309, since King Jaume did not tax the Jews in 1310. See also Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 145–146.

⁴⁹ ACA: C 139: 323r (26 June 1307): “Recepimus litteras vestras noviter nobis missas in quibus nobis significastis [bailiff general] quod vos, ratione privilegii per nos concessi aljamis judeorum regni Valencie super faciendo solido et libra in peytis, tributis et aliis exaccionibus . . . fecistis congregari in civitate Valencie procuratores ipsarum aljamarum et quod, auctoritate ipsius privilegii, mandastis eis ex parte nostra quod facerent solidum et libram predictos et quod exceptis judeis Muriveteris qui assentire noluerunt ordinationi facte per aljamas ipsius regni super faciendo solido et libra supradictis. . . .”

⁵⁰ ACA: C 139: 323r: “Quare ad premissa taliter vobis dicimus respondendum quod volumus . . . quod privilegium per nos concessum ipsis aljamis super faciendo dictis solido et libra in memoratis exaccionibus inviolabiliter observetur . . . contradiccionem facta per judeos Muriveteris in aliquo non obstante.”

conformed to the new plan, he specifically required it to send its fiscal accounts for his review.⁵¹

If not exactly altruistic, the affluent *adelantats* who led the protest had not been blithely shifting the burden of royal taxes onto the shoulders of humbler families. In response to the king's demands for subsidies, they had sometimes borrowed money from Christians on behalf of the *aljama*, using their personal assets to guarantee the loans and personally incurring all penalties for tardy repayment. The community was of course expected to requite them, but this could be a lengthy process. In 1307 the *adelantats* Isaac Passarell, Jucef Bonet, and Ismael Ballester jointly borrowed large sums—630 sous from Guillem de Bellpuig alone—to meet the needs of the community. Passarell and Bonet both registered complaints the following year that the *aljama* still had not reimbursed them for the interest and penalties they had paid.⁵² The wealth of the oligarchs could therefore prove crucial for keeping the community on favorable terms with the monarchy and for shielding especially the disadvantaged families from the community's creditors.

Recognizing this, the "greater part" of the community opined in 1308 that despite communal legislation formally instituting the *per sou e lliura* plan (*ordinatum cum tachana et sacramento*), it was preferable for the *aljama* to take out interest-bearing loans (*manulevare ad usuras*) in order to pay its portion of the 30,000-sous royal subsidy. The

⁵¹ ACA: C 289: 35v (10 January 1308): Queen Blanca orders the *aljama* to send the *albarà* to the bailiff general, "[c]um dominus Rex Aragonum vir noster . . . velit videre albarana[m] presentis taxationis quam fecistis per solidum et libram cum aliis aljamis judeorum regni Valencie." The one *albarà* referred to here obviously included the separate declarations of all the members of the community.

⁵² ACA: C 289: 52v (13 March 1308) is the complaint of Passarell, in which it is noted that, at the instance of Bellpuig, some of his goods were confiscated and auctioned off; and 72v (8 June 1308) is that of Bonet: "Exposuit coram nobis Juceffus Bonet, judeus Muriveteris, quod tempore quo erat secretarius ipsius aljame simul cum Açach Passarell et Asmell Balester, judeis Muriveteris, pro ipsa aljama ratione tributorum et aliarum exaccionum domino regi et nobis [the queen] solvendorum quasdam quantitates peccunie manulevavit, et completo officio tenebat, requisivit ipsam aljamam quod computaret cum eo . . . et servarent ipsum indempne de ipsa manuleuta; cumque ipsa aljama hoc facere vero laxi . . . dictus Jucef . . . usuras et quartos habuit solvere et quasdam expensas et dampna sustinere, ut asseritur." A *responsum* of Rabbi Shelomo ben Adret (*She'elot u-Teshuvot*, 3: no. 429) addresses a case from Morvedre in which the *adelantats* borrowed money from Christians on behalf of the community. However, neither the names of the officials nor the date of the case are given.

Jews comprising this majority reckoned that poorer Jews would be relieved of taxation in the short term since it was the *adelantats* and others of their class who would be borrowing the money and securing the loans. They preferred indemnifying the oligarchs in the future to paying the king immediately. Representing an affluent minority, Abraham Coffe and Jucef Algehen expressed their desire to pay their taxes *per sou e lliura*, even if this meant rendering more than in the past. King Jaume acceded to their request and freed them from all loans the rest of the community might assume.⁵³ This effectively squelched the majority's plan, for it was not about to borrow money without the backing of the well-to-do. In Morvedre, lower- and middle-class families were not necessarily agitating for a *per sou e lliura* system; for many of them, the oligarchic regime had its benefits.

The use of a kingdom-wide *per sou e lliura* system for the assessment and collection of the Jews' taxes indeed caused greater damage to the smaller *aljamas*, like that of Morvedre, than to the chief *aljama* in the capital. Prior to the institution of the system in 1307, the *aljama* of Valencia had been responsible for thirty percent of the total subsidy. Once established, the system, which the Jews of Valencia had sought, facilitated the more thorough exploitation of the resources of Jews outside the capital. The system functioned so effectively that by 1313 the exhausted smaller *aljamas* were not able to pay as large a proportion of the sum of taxes as they had in 1306.⁵⁴ Thus a new arrangement was hammered out: of every 20 sous rendered by the Jews of the kingdom, the *aljama* of Valencia would pay 11 sous and the other *aljamas* 9 sous. The following year, however, the bailiff general modified the arrangement, so that the capital's *aljama* would be liable for only half of the subsidy. The *aljamas* of Morvedre and

⁵³ ACA: C 142: 35v (21 May 1308): "Nunc maior pars aljame Muriveteris predice, ut asseritur [by Coffe and Algehen], volunt manuevare ad usuras partem predice aljame contingentem in quantitate superius expressata [30,000 sous], aliis predice aljame paratis solvere partem eos contingentem."

⁵⁴ Other factors may have contributed to the changing circumstances of the *aljamas*. The populations of the smaller Jewish communities perhaps did not expand as rapidly as did that of the *aljama* in the capital. This can be said almost certainly about Xàtiva, though perhaps not about Morvedre. The Jews of towns like Xàtiva and Morvedre would have found it easier to move their domiciles to seigneurial lands or to distribute their assets outside of the royal domain (on which, see below in this chapter). Since the capital and its *horta* were under the tighter control of municipal and royal authorities, its Jews had less room to maneuver. In other words, affluent Jews outside the capital could more easily conceal some of their assets.

Xàtiva immediately remonstrated. After first ordering the bailiff to return to the arrangement of 1313, King Jaume grasped that such arrangements could not in any case accord with the established system of individual assessment (*per sou e lliura*). Sensing that some connivance between the kingdom's Jewish oligarchs and the bailiff general lay behind the 1313 arrangement, and that the complaints issuing from Morvedre and Xàtiva in 1314 were voiced by powerful Jews, he enjoined the bailiff to return to the *per sou e lliura* plan.⁵⁵

However the tax burden was distributed among the *aljamas*, many Jewish families were clearly straining mightily under its weight. The need to acquire funds for making tax payments, or for liquidating other debts which the king's demands had only made more pressing, prompted Jews in towns throughout the kingdom to sell Christians their homes in the *jueria* or their titles to other houses and buildings located in the *jueria*. King Jaume was troubled less by the potential problem of Christians living in the Jewish quarters of royal towns than by the possibility of the royal treasury losing the rents incumbent on some of this real estate. Jews had been selling the houses without informing the local bailiff, who consequently did not know who was liable for paying the rents. Late in 1314 the king had proclamations made in all the synagogues instructing the Jews to apprise the local bailiff of any sales they had made, and he forbade all sales of *jueria* properties to Christians in the future.⁵⁶ The Jews were thus denied a means, however extreme and distasteful, of quickly raising cash to satisfy the king.

When in place, as it was virtually every year after 1307, the *per sou e lliura* system did not leave Morvedre's Jewish families, rich or poor, much room for maneuver. The sworn declarations of assets made by householders enabled the *adelantats*, always racing to meet

⁵⁵ ACA: C 155: 260r-v (29 December 1314); and C 156: 116r (11 July 1315) for Jaume's order to the bailiff general "quod quilibet ipsorum judeorum teneantur contribuere in predictis pro bonis suis per solidum et per libram juxta privilegium . . . vosque judeos ipsos et eorum singulares ad contributionem huiusmodi compellatis."

⁵⁶ ACA: C 211: 275r (19 March 1315). King Jaume had also instructed his bailiffs to confiscate all properties sold, but the municipalities objected, maintaining that such sales were "customary" and that they had been collecting the rents on some of these houses from the Jews or from the Christian buyers. Jaume therefore permitted the finalization of all transactions hitherto initiated. On 13 June 1314, King Jaume had ordered the bailiff general to investigate such sales specifically in the Jewish quarter of Xàtiva (ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 39, no. 4919).

the next tax deadline, to be as thorough or as ruthless as necessary. Fearing that the *adelantats* might be overly scrupulous, Bonaçan Avenrodric, a Jew of middling wealth, asked Queen Blanca to remind them not to tax him for the monies he had received *in comanda* and had since returned to his business partners.⁵⁷ Another middle-class Jew, Vives de Hinos, denounced the *adelantats* for “violently robbing” him of his vineyard and then selling it to a local Christian.⁵⁸

Most complaints, however, were voiced by members of the fractious oligarchy. Once the *adelantats* had the sworn statements of assets in their hands, they could use them as weapons against their rivals in the local contest for power and influence. The *adelantats* might fully and legitimately tax their rivals in accordance with their income, or they might, as was alleged, tax them at an excessive rate. Short of appeal to the crown, there was no completely effective mechanism for ensuring that the *adelantats* taxed all families fairly. The sworn statements themselves prevented truly gross abuse of the system, but in determining each household’s rate of taxation, the *adelantats* were left to their own devices. Since the oligarchic families rotated in and out of *aljama* government, most got their chance to wreak fiscal vengeance on their opponents. The knowledge that they would soon enough be on the giving or the receiving end of the fiscal system restrained them when in office and increased their patience when out of office. It also pushed them to diversify and geographically disperse their assets. They knew that the competition would eventually hit them hard; they might as well lessen the damage a bit.

The wealthy oligarchs walked a fine line between fulfilling their fiscal responsibilities to the community, thereby maintaining their elite and honored status, and prudently concealing enough of their assets to avoid a severe economic setback and social demotion. Poverty, after all, meant social degradation within the Jewish community. When representing their case before the royal authorities, however, the oligarchs employed the terms “rich” and “poor” rather differently. To support their claims that they had been taxed excessively, they would assert that they had been unfairly labeled “rich” and were in fact “poor.” In asserting thus, they were merely endeavor-

⁵⁷ ACA: C 289: 55v (1 April 1308).

⁵⁸ ACA: C 141: 186v (31 January 1308): “ipsum Vives possessione dicte vinee per violenciam spoliando.” The vineyard was sold to Jaume Bargaloni for 550 sous.

oring to avoid really becoming poor and really losing power. The king and his advisors knew to take such assertions with a large grain of salt; they understood that such juridical representations were all part and parcel of Jewish fiscal politics. The “poor” often had quite a lot at stake.

Between 1308 and 1321 the primary losers in these tax wars were, judging by their pleas, the allied Aborrabe and Algehen families. In August 1308 Vidal Aborrabe maintained that despite his willingness to pay his fair share of taxes, calculated *per sou e lliura*, the *adelantats* had exacted too much, even confiscating his property.⁵⁹ Vidal was fortunately chosen as *adelantat* in 1310, but because he did not have the support of one of the other two *adelantats*, he could not effectively protect his friends. Jucef Algehen pointed out that when the other two *adelantats*, Benvenist Coffe and Jahudà Senton, assessed him unjustly, they did it without the consent of Vidal.⁶⁰ The Aborrabes were taking such a beating in Morvedre that one of them, Jaffia, moved to Tortosa in 1313 with the hope that there the *adelantats* would be friendlier and ignorant of his investments in Morvedre. *Aljama* officials in Morvedre, however, were a step ahead of him and taxed his Morvedre assets anyway.⁶¹

Thus checked, Jaffia returned home. But he was still unhappy. In the fall of 1320 he, his son Efrahim, and the brothers Jucef and Salamó Algehen led a rebellion against the reigning *adelantats* and Jacob Aldotori, the *aljama*’s representative (*sindic*) on the kingdom-wide board of assessors meeting in the capital.⁶² They and their “rebel” followers accused the officials of negligence and of “willfully”

⁵⁹ ACA: C 142: 127r (9 August 1308).

⁶⁰ ACA: C 290: 102v (5 March 1310). The Aborrabes and the Algehens must have belonged to one of the factions embroiled in a dispute over the appointment of the community’s synagogue reader. As reported in a *responsum* of Shelomo ben Adret (*She’elot u-Teshuvot*, 3: no. 428), each faction (anonymous in this text) appointed a different synagogue reader and vowed not to listen to the appointee of the opposing faction pray in the synagogue. Adret decided, in the interest of communal peace, that there could be two readers, but that they must pray on alternating Sabbaths.

⁶¹ ACA: C 351: 242r (2 August 1313). Jaffia’s move should be viewed in relation to the larger problem of Valencian Jews changing residence, to other towns or to seigneurial lands, in order to avoid heavy taxation. See below in this chapter.

⁶² There was similar turmoil in other *aljamas*. In Xàtiva the incumbent *adelantats* simply refused to tax their people, hoping to leave the dirty work to their successors (ACA: C 171: 17v [13 December 1320]), while in Valencia the royal subsidy was causing so much “disorder” among the Jews that elections could not even be held (C 170: 282r–v [1 December 1320]).

taxing them unjustly. In response, King Jaume instructed the bailiff general to compel the *sindic* and *adelantats* to swear, under threat of ban (*alatma*), to tax their charges fairly. The bailiff was also to choose two Jews, “who do not belong to a faction” (*qui non sint de parte*), to assess the officials themselves for taxes, to investigate their activities, and to inform him of any malfeasance. The officials protested that they had already taken such an oath and that if they had really conducted themselves as the “rebels” claimed, they would be regarded as “infamous” by the community. The rebels, they asserted, were simply trying to harm them through their “malice and sophistries.” The perplexed monarch rescinded his previous orders.⁶³ Getting at the truth behind the volley of accusations was too difficult. What one faction viewed as just the other invariably regarded as wrong.

Distrust of the opposing faction extended to judicial affairs as well. Even when he had evidence as palpable as a wound to show the *adelantats*, Jucef Algehen avoided their court and appeared before the bailiff general, asking him to fine his alleged assailants, Isaac Maymó and the Abenvives brothers, “according to the rite of the Jews.” The defendants naturally charged Jucef with “maliciously” violating the jurisdiction of the *adelantats* over cases involving only Jews. If not allies of the defendants, the *adelantats* were certainly not friends of Jucef, who would shortly engineer a rebellion against their fiscal administration. Failure on both the judicial and fiscal fronts caused Jucef to retreat to the capital, where he resided a few years.⁶⁴

⁶³ ACA: C 170: 269r–v (22 November 1320) is the initial complaint by the Aborrabes and the Algehens that the *adelantats* were “gravando eosdem voluntarie contra ordinationem . . . per nos [King Jaume] factam . . . super contribuendo in predictis [taxes] per solidum atque libram”; 272v–273r (26 November) is the king’s detailed solution; and 296r (9 December) contains the counter-charges of the *adelantats*, including that “aliqui judei rebelles propter eorum malitiam et cavillationes possent sindicum et secretarios multum ledere et bona que habent facere consumi,” and the king’s voiding of his previous order.

⁶⁴ ACA: C 168: 142v (5 November 1319) is the complaint of Isaac Maymó and Jucef Abenvives against Jucef Algehen for having accused them of assault in the court of the bailiff general, “super eo quod asserit ipsos et utrumque ipsorum incurrisse penas duarum librarum auri juxta ritum judeorum sibi solvendarum;” in 142r (same date) Mossé Abenvives, a resident of Xàtiva, makes the same complaint. C 169: 86v (10 March 1320) concerns Algehen’s appeal of the sentence handed down by the bailiff general in his case against the Abenvives brothers. C 179: 64r–v (5 June 1323) describes Jucef Algehen as an “inhabitant” of Valencia; however, he was back in Morvedre by 1325.

Y. Assis, “Crime and Violence in Jewish Society in Spain (13th–14th Centuries),” [Hebrew] *Zion*, 50 (1985), 228, points out that Pere II authorized the Jews of

Though the Aborrabes and the Algehens got the worst of it for a time, their opponents did not succeed in ejecting them from the political arena. Jaffia Aborrabe, at least, would serve in 1327 as *sindic* of the *aljama* and as one of the administrators of its new system of internal taxes. In holding the latter post, he would counterbalance the other administrators, Abraham and Benvenist Coffe and Jacob Aldoctori. An uneasy balance of power prevailed among the oligarchic families and the shifting factions they formed. If any one family threatened to become overweening, acquiring too many offices and too much influence, the other families would band together to thwart its pretensions, as they had done with the Avinçapruts and the Alconstantinis.

In 1321–22 it was the turn of the Coffes. King Jaume had appointed Salamó Coffe in 1318 as scribe and slaughterer of the Jewish community for life, which meant that he would receive all fees and other revenue pertaining to these offices, regardless of who actually redacted the documents and slaughtered the animals. The *aljama* had objected to this appointment, arguing, for instance, that it conflicted with the royal concession to it of “a counter for the sale of meat.”⁶⁵ Failing to change the king’s mind, the community resorted to its own informal means of opposing and pressuring Salamó Coffe, who consequently moved to Valencia sometime prior to August 1321. Once Salamó was forced out of town, the *aljama* suggested to King Jaume that his appointee had died. Responding just as the *aljama* expected, the king empowered it to appoint the new scribe and slaughterer. Only the plea of Pere Babot, a Christian tailor of Morvedre to whom Salamó had, on his exit, transferred the revenues of the offices,

Catalonia to try cases of violence between Jews in their own courts according to *halakhah*. In 1309 Queen Blanca acknowledged the *adelantats*’ jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases involving only Jews, except cases of homicide, which were reserved for the king’s adjudication. The queen, however, reminded her bailiff general, Enric de Quintavall, that the *adelantats* were obliged to settle accounts with him “de omnibus coloniis, penis et proventibus jurisdictionis eis comisse,” since it had not been the king’s intention “quod predicti adenantati proventus et exitus dictarum causarum pretextu dicti privilegii possint sibi retinere” (ACA: C 289: 127r).

⁶⁵ ACA: C 166: 297v (21, 28 July 1318) includes two letters concerning this matter. The first letter indicates that the “tabulam ad vendendam carnes” was located between the *portal* of Domènec Marzen and the houses of Pere Albert. The second shows that King Jaume’s appointment of Salamó to the scribal office had forced the bailiff general to revoke his own appointment of one Isaac de Gerona, another Jew of Morvedre, to the office. The *aljama* would have preferred Isaac, who was not a member of a powerful family and was therefore unthreatening.

prevented the *aljama* from completely hoodwinking the king.⁶⁶ The *aljama*, however, was not quite finished with the still breathing Salamó: in 1322 it attempted to deprive him of the ownership of property in the *terme* of Morvedre and heavily taxed his son Abraham, still resident in Morvedre.⁶⁷ Abraham, along with his friend Gento Toledano and son-in-law Jucef Minal, was hit hard again in 1326, when, presumably, neither he nor his allies had a voice in *aljama* government.⁶⁸

Still, serving as a communal official, even as one of the three *adelantats*, was no guarantee of a lighter tax burden, particularly when the other officials were either very scrupulous or rivals—and in this claustrophobic world of *aljama* politics everyone was potentially a rival, everyone stood to gain from another's loss. In 1324, while recording in the communal account book the property tax (*peita*) then being collected from each household, the *adelantat* Isaac Passarell came to the shocking realization that in accordance with the tax rate of that year—18 diners per pound, or 7.5 percent—he and his relations were obliged to render 2,000 sous. He reacted “violently” to this assessment and refused to pay his due. On account of such behavior, he was not reelected as *adelantat* along with his former colleagues, Jucef Bonet and Ismael Ballester.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ ACA: C 233: 86r (7 August 1321) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 497, no. 41] is Jaume's letter authorizing the *aljama* to appoint substitutes for the “dead” Coffe. C 172: 231r (8 January 1322) concerns the plea of Babot, who was to retain the offices and their revenues if Coffe was indeed alive. He was—see n. 67.

⁶⁷ ACA: C 174: 123r (17 March 1322) treats the “proprietas et possessione cuiusdam hereditatis site in termino Muriveteris a qua idem Salamon injuste eiectionem se asserit.” C 371: 149r–v (13 October 1322) is the plea of Abraham and Gento Toledano regarding taxation “contra ordinationem factam per dictum dominum regem in talibus.”

⁶⁸ ACA: C 188: 1r–v (7 October 1326). Coffe and Toledano registered their complaints jointly in both 1322 (see n. 67) and 1326, which indicates that they were allies and that the *adelantats* and the “talliatores judeorum dicti loci [who] talliarunt ipsos judeos immoderate et ultra facultates bonorum suorum” regarded them as such. Abraham Coffe's plea was followed the next year by that of his son-in-law Jucef Minal—C 379: 129v–130r (30 January 1327). Jucef complained that previously he had been taxed at a rate of 4 sous per 1,000 sous and that now the assessors and/or *adelantats* were increasing his rate to 11 sous per 1,000 sous. “Compelled by poverty,” he borrowed 200 sous from his father-in-law.

⁶⁹ ACA: C 373: 173v–174r (1 May 1325). Bonet registered the complaint about the conduct of Passarell, who “fecit illo anno caput brevium, in quo scribebat receptas et datas peytarum dicte aliam, et cum ipsa aljama eodem anno tatxasset quod quilibet judeus solveret pro eo quod haberet decem et octo denarios pro libra ratione peyte quam nobis dare habebant, prefatus Isachus, contradicens tatxationi predictae violenter et indebite, retinuit penes se de hiis que ipse et quidam eius coniuncti debebant solvere in dicta peyta tatxacionem predictam duos mille solidos.” Bonet

The crown's extraction of immense sums from Valencian Jewry between 1321 and 1327 exacerbated social tensions in the *jueria* of Morvedre, and not just between oligarchic families. During these years the inchoate grumbling of non-elite Jews became louder, their efforts to break the oligarchy's monopoly of power more concerted. Discontent simmered for a few years before reaching a boiling point in 1326. True, affluent families felt the squeeze of the crown's fiscal vise and they too were unhappy, but, from the perspective of the lower classes, unless the wealthy were also manifestly in danger of being taxed into utter impoverishment, they could not possibly be producing enough revenue for the king. The wealthy, humbler Jews knew, could protest, stall, conceal assets, and retreat to the domains of their baronial patrons.⁷⁰ Lacking influence and patronage, the poor could not evade the tax assessors and collectors. The desultory pious legacies of the well-to-do, while helpful, did not provide adequate relief for families facing the rapacity of Jaume II.⁷¹

Making headway against the powerful oligarchs was, as ever, difficult. *Aljama* officials and the municipal justice had made short work of the unidentified "rebels and objectors" in 1297; the oligarchs had outfoxed the "greater part" of the community in 1308; and in 1320, any lower-class sympathizers of the Aborrabes and the Algehens had seen their hopes dashed. A Jew of lesser means, Nacin Astrug, discovered firsthand how the oligarchs defeated challenges to their authority. In 1321 Nacin appealed to the king after the *adelantats*, attempting to tax him for alleged undisclosed assets in Xàtiva, barged into his house in his absence to seize bedding and other items. On royal order, the local bailiff designated two Jews to investigate the case, but the latter, cowed by the oligarchs, "did not care to make

also pointed out that when he and Ballester "fuissent post hec refirmati per dictam aliamam ad secretarie officium," they personally had to compensate for the 2,000-sous shortfall in *aljama* revenue.

⁷⁰ For the movement of Jews to seigneurial lands, see below in this chapter.

⁷¹ ACA: C 171: 104v (18 January 1321) treats the bequest of landed property to the *aljama* by Bonet de Linas. The land carried an annual rent of 6 *mazemutinas* which were to be distributed among the poor (see also chap. 1). The creation of confraternities for dealing with the needs of the poor in a more systematic fashion seems not to have taken place among the Jews of Morvedre until the later fourteenth century. See below, and the more general comments of Assis, *Golden Age*, 242–246; *idem*, "Welfare and Mutual Aid in the the Spanish Jewish Communities," in *The Sephardi Legacy*, ed. H. Beinart (Jerusalem, 1992), 318–327; and A. Blasco Martínez, "Instituciones socioreligiosas judías de Zaragoza (siglos XIV–XV)—Sinagogas, confradías, hospitales," *Sefarad*, 50 (1990), 3–46.

a ruling on it.” The bailiff general was then given the task of penetrating the collusive silence.⁷²

In 1322, however, the speed with which King Jaume expected the *aljamas* to furnish the massive subsidies for the Sardinia expedition left the *adelantats* and their backers little choice but to adopt a fundraising scheme the majority had favored in 1308: the *adelantats*’ assumption and securing of loans on behalf of the *aljama*.⁷³ Though the members of the oligarchic faction in power now had the opportunity to extend some relief to poorer families, since it was they who determined just how this new debt burden would be apportioned among the community’s householders, they instead abandoned the fairly straightforward and graduated *per sou e lliura* plan for more arbitrary methods. Unfortunately, the families who raised objections with the royal authorities acted more out of self-interest than out of any desire to achieve thoroughgoing reform.⁷⁴ Considering how Nacin Astrug had been stymied, most non-elite families would not have bothered to remonstrate publicly in court. Whispering to the right people in high places, however, was another matter.

In 1323 anonymous Jews tried to get the *aljama*’s Christian tax collector, Clement Crescuyl, into hot water by leaking information to the king that “the *aljama*” suspected that Crescuyl had collected an extra 4,000 sous from Jewish taxpayers and then embezzled the money. The royal judge assigned to the case discovered that *aljama* officials were actually quite pleased with Crescuyl’s accounting.⁷⁵ The anonymous informants’ framing of Crescuyl nevertheless served the purpose of subjecting to royal scrutiny the fiscal regime of the oligarchs who employed him.

⁷² ACA: C 172: 105v (3 November 1321): “non curarunt super eo aliquid ordinare.”

⁷³ ACA: C 177: 33r–v (8 March 1322), in which the king accedes to the *aljama*’s request to raise the second half of its subsidy as it had raised the first half—“per modum mutui sive prestiti.”

⁷⁴ ACA: C 371: 149r–v (13 October 1322), 153v (18 October), 193r (5 November), and 233r (17 November). In each instance, the complainants grouched about how they had been unfairly taxed; they never addressed the systemic problems. All were members of the elite, with the important exception of the Asseyos (153v), on whom see below.

⁷⁵ ACA: C 179: 193v (6 July 1323) is King Jaume’s order to the judge, Pere Calbet, to investigate; and C 180: 187v (17 October) treats the results of Calbet’s inquiry, namely, that the charge of malfasance had originated in particular with Crescuyl’s Jewish enemy. The enemy was Bonet Avincanes, on whom see below.

When King Jaume, Prince Alfons, and the bailiff general resumed exacting extraordinary subsidies from Valencian Jews in 1324–25 after a two-year moratorium, they reimposed the *per sou e lliura* system on the Morvedre community. Certain middling families, disgruntled with the arbitrary taxation of the previous two years, notified them that it had fallen into disuse there.⁷⁶ Furthermore, in order to expedite the collection of taxes from the Jews, the king instructed the bailiff general, Bernat Sanou, to divide the subsidy of 1324 among the *aljamas* himself, instead of waiting for the board of *aljama* representatives to accomplish this task.⁷⁷ This turn of events took some Jews of Morvedre completely by surprise. Unprepared to play the usual shell game with their assets, sixteen Jews simply refused to declare them under oath and incurred a collective fine of 4,000 sous for their impudence. Of the ten identifiable delinquents, eight were from oligarchic, though not necessarily allied families; in fact, they squabbled over the partition of the fine.⁷⁸ Prince Alfons had learned of their recalcitrance from certain Jewish informants in Morvedre, middle-class opponents of the oligarchs.⁷⁹

By the spring of 1325 the politics of status preservation had reached a critical level of nastiness. As officials of the capital's *aljama* related to King Jaume, individual Jews and *aljamas* were injuring each other

⁷⁶ ACA: C 373: 47r–v (13 February 1325) concerns the complaints of Samuel Bubo and Bonet Avincanes, and 81r (7 March) and 79r (20 March) those of Isaac Abenafrit and five members of the Barbut family.

⁷⁷ ACA: C 180: 187r (15 October 1323) is the letter to Sanou and Domènec Claramont, a Valencian notary, who were to act “juxta vestri arbitrium.” The *aljama* of Xàtiva was to be given special consideration, due to its “maximum poverty,” and hence to be dealt with separately by Claramont and Pere Fuster, the bailiff of Xàtiva (C 180: 188r [same date]). C 180: 188r–v (17 October 1323) shows that the *per sou e lliura* plan was still in operation within the *aljamas*, though now the representatives from the *aljamas* were to render the declarations and assessments of property directly to the bailiff general.

⁷⁸ ACA: C 373: 109v (31 March 1325), 99r (2 April), 130r (16 April), 139r–v (19 April); and CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 97 (14 May). The eight oligarchs were: Abraham Coffe; Rahael, the widow of another Abraham Coffe; David Coffe; Salamó Coffe; Salamó Ballester; Jaffia Aborrabe; and Gento Toledano and Astruc Cortovi, friends of the Coffes who joined the elite of office-holding families by the 1340s if not earlier. ACA: C 186: 2r–v (9 May) treats the plea of twelve of the tax dodgers that the other four—Jaffia Aborrabe, Astruc Cortovi, and Abraham and David Coffe—had persuaded the local bailiff to fine them less heavily and “minus debite.”

⁷⁹ Prince Alfons points out that he was informed “per aliquos judeos dicte aljame” (ACA: C 123v–124r [10 April 1325]); and “ex relatione quorundam judeorum” (130r [16 April]). As for the identity of the informants, see below.

through making “many and divers unjust and calumnious accusations and denunciations.”⁸⁰ The *aljamas* of Morvedre and Xàtiva, for instance, claimed that in recent intercommunal fiscal negotiations the Jews of Valencia did not properly observe the *per sou e lliura* plan but determined tax rates “at their pleasure.”⁸¹ Inside the Jewish quarter of Morvedre accusations and recriminations so poisoned the atmosphere that by April 1326 the community could not assemble to elect its officials. Prince Alfons enjoined the local bailiff to choose “two suitable Jews” to take care of the essential business of taxing Jewish householders; if necessary, the bailiff was to appoint the *adelantats* as well.⁸²

At the center of the tumult in Morvedre were three individuals: Bonet Avincanes, his father-in-law Gento Asseyo, and his brother-in-law Mossé Asseyo.⁸³ They were Jews of middling but growing wealth, men on the make—or upstarts in the eyes of the oligarchs—who wanted a share of power in the *aljama* and who were disgrun-

⁸⁰ ACA: C 373: 141v (20 April 1325): Jews and *aljamas* “ad invicem, ut unus alium dampnificet, faciunt et movent plures et diversas iniquas et calumpnias accusationes seu denunciationes.” To obviate needless legal expense, Prince Alfons orders officials to punish Jews leveling false accusations against coreligionists.

⁸¹ ACA: C 373: 142v–143r (16 April 1325): “repugnantes aliamam Muriveteris, conantur modis omnibus quibus possunt taxare ad eorum placitum in contributionibus aliisque exactionibus regiis.” C 376: 211r–v (31 May 1326) and C 189: 188v (12 August 1326) are accusations of a similar tenor against the Jews of the capital. The Jews of Morvedre and Xàtiva were in part responding to the claims of the *aljama* of Valencia that they were refusing to pay their share of the costs of lodging and feeding the royal household, which was supposed to be borne by all the Valencian *aljamas* (C 373: 65r–v [23 February 1325]; CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 165 [27 May 1326], copied in C 189: 13v).

⁸² ACA: C 376: 174r (16 April 1326): “Pro parte aliquorum judeorum aliame Muriveteris intelleximus quod ipsa aliama in eligendis sibi secretariis et adelantatis potest minime convenire . . . mandamus . . . quatenus duos judeos dicte aliame idoneos illos videlicet de quibus noveritis ad hoc utilius expedire qui taxent et coligant peytas et alias contributiones predictas eligatis, nec minus adelantatos supradictos qui utantur et uti possint eorum officio prout hactenus est fieri assuetum donec ipsa aliama et non amplius secretarios et adelantatos sibi elegerit supradictos.”

⁸³ For an extended analysis of the brouhaha surrounding Avincanes and the Asseynos, see M.D. Meyerson, “Revisiting the Wax-Press Affair in Morvedre: Jewish Fiscal Politics in the Fourteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia,” in *Jews, Muslims and Christians Around the Crown of Aragon: Essays in Honor of Elena Lourié*, ed. H.J. Hames (Leiden, 2004); and E. Lourié, “Mafiosi and Malsines.” Lourié’s interpretation (85–89) differs from my own, partly because her emphases and interest in the affair are different, and partly because she did not have much additional documentation on the Morvedre community at her disposal. Without benefit of this documentation, she understandably took most of the charges against Avincanes and the Asseynos at their face-value, thus labeling them “mafiosi.”

tled with the fiscal administration of the ruling elite. The Asseyos made their money through retail commerce and moneylending; Avincanes, who perhaps also engaged in these activities, sought to improve his economic position by subletting the *jueria's* wax-press from the king's concessionaire, Pedro Martínez de Huesca. Particularly disconcerting to the oligarchs was the fact that the trio enjoyed some influence with Prince Alfons.

Indeed, it was Bonet Avincanes and the Asseyos who had made the damning revelations to the prince regarding the oligarchs' arbitrary methods of tax assessment and their less than full disclosure of their own assets.⁸⁴ Prince Alfons had then, in May 1325, put Bonet in a position to obtain more valuable information of this sort, authorizing him and two local Christians, Alfons Martí and Bernat Vives, to inspect the *adelantats'* accounts for the purpose of resolving the financial problems caused by the refusal of the *adelantat* Isaac Passarell to pay his share of taxes the previous year.⁸⁵ The oligarchs had tried to silence Bonet and his in-laws with bribes and other forms of persuasion, but they had only succeeded in getting angry warnings from the prince and insults and punches from Bonet.⁸⁶

By the time Prince Alfons learned of the *aljama's* inability to hold elections the elite enemies of Bonet Avincanes and the Asseyos had mobilized to wrest control of the wax-press from Bonet. At stake here was not the commercial integrity of Bonet or the supply of wax but the authority of the oligarchy, which Bonet and friends had already damaged by besting the oligarchs in every encounter. The oligarchs first organized, in April 1326, a boycott of Bonet's wax-press.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ See above at nn. 74–76, 78–79.

⁸⁵ ACA: C 373: 173v–174r, and see above at n. 69. The complaint about Passarell's negligence came from one of the other *adelantats*, Jucef Bonet, who had personally assumed responsibility for 7,000 sous of the *aljama's* debts. Passarell's payment of 2,000 sous was supposed to have covered part of the 7,000 sous.

⁸⁶ For instance, they bribed Mossé Asseyo with a lifetime tax-exemption, but when his father and brother-in-law continued to act as Prince Alfons's confidence men, they exacted a large "loan" from him and deprived him of his seat in the synagogue. An angry Prince Alfons threatened punishment (ACA: C 375: 89v–90r [7 May 1325], and 123v [13 September]). Among Bonet's violent responses to oligarchic pressure were knocking Jaffia Aborrabe to the ground with a blow to the head and drawing a dagger on the *aljama's* tax collector, Clement Crescuyl, when Crescuyl tried to place a lien on his property (Lourie, "Mafiosi and Malsines," 94–99, for the relevant testimonies).

⁸⁷ ACA: C 409: 25r (14 April 1326); and Lourie, "Mafiosi and Malsines," 85–86 n. 53.

Then, in the summer, they recruited Christian friends to convince Bonet to relinquish his lease: the local bailiff, Guillem Folchau, intimidated Bonet and his allies; Pere Babot and Pere Lezina threatened Bonet with death.⁸⁸ When Bonet refused to abandon the wax-press, the oligarchs prevailed on Pedro Martínez to break his lease with Bonet so that he could sublet the press to some of their number, namely, Isaac Maymó and Mossé and Samuel Passarell.⁸⁹

At the same time, the oligarchs colluded with Babot and Lezina to accuse Bonet and the Asseyos of various crimes before the royal court. Most of the charges were false, or, at best, based on actions of the defendants that were twisted out of context. Not coincidentally, five of the nine witnesses willing to testify secretly for the prosecution were from oligarchic families whose members had served as *adelantats*.⁹⁰ One of the most substantial charges against Bonet concerned his alleged illicit informing (*malshinut*). His accusers maintained that Bonet had used the threat of “informing” to prevent good Jewish men from complaining about his violence or his shady business practices. Perhaps he had, but in testifying that many Jews in the community lived in trepidation of the malicious informing of Bonet and his in-laws, the accusers spoke for themselves and other members of the ruling elite.

⁸⁸ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 169 (25 June 1326): “Cum Gentonus Assehu, Samuel Biobu et Benetus Avencanes, judei Muriveteris, timeant per vos [the bailiff] gravari iniuste sive etiam indebite molestari, idcirco ad eorum supplicationem nos exhibitam vobis dicimus et mandamus quatenus manutenendo et defendendo dictos judeos in jure suo non gravetis eosdem iniuste seu gravari per aliquem aliquatenus permittatis.” CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 172 (8 July 1326) concerns the death threat of Babot and Lezina. Babot at least was a friend of the influential Coffe family—see n. 66.

⁸⁹ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 205 (26 November 1326) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 499–501, no. 43]. Explaining to the king his wish to terminate the lease with Bonet, Martínez wrote, “since the said Bonet is a poor man who has nothing, neither your revenue nor mine would be very secure.”

⁹⁰ See Lourie, “Mafiosi and Malsines,” for the transcribed text of the charges and witness depositions. The five oligarchic witnesses were Isaac Maymó, Jaffia Aborrabe, Mossé and Samuel Passarell, and Samuel Bonet—and three of these the new lessees of the wax-press (see above at the previous note). A sixth witness, Mossé Abenvives, was an ally of Isaac Maymó, whom he had joined in an assault on Jucef Algehen a few years before (see at n. 64). The three remaining witnesses—Isaac Bites, Abraham Azaron, and the butcher Galafo Miganeques—had no demonstrable ties to the others and no obvious political motive for testifying against the defendants. One of the charges against Bonet concerned his alleged insults to Christianity, on which see chap. 2.

Even if the wax-press changed hands, the criminal charges against Avincanes and the Asseyos did not result in their conviction. Gento Asseyo was on favorable enough terms with the crown in April 1327 to receive a royal writ of protection against his creditors.⁹¹ That same month King Jaume also cautioned his bailiffs to give Gento, his son, and son-in-law a proper hearing should any of them appear before their tribunals.⁹² The trio had not triumphed over their oligarchic antagonists and still required protection against them and the Christian officials who favored them. In the spring of 1327 the contest for power in the *aljama* was at a stalemate.

Bonet Avincanes and the Asseyos had never styled themselves as the leaders of a movement of middle- and lower-class Jews against the oligarchy. They were not striving to effect constitutional change; they barely paid lip service to the notion. Their politics were primarily self-interested. When they leaked information to Prince Alfons, for example, they did it to harm their enemies or to advance their own position; they did not tell the prince about the plight of the Jewish poor or the frustrations of the Jewish middle class. Yet because they had friends, and because a good number of lower- and middle-class families shared their dissatisfaction with the oligarchy's fiscal administration, when their clash with the oligarchs entered the realm of public knowledge it was bound, in a community of some sixty households, to cause a stir and to become a focus for the discontent of the disenfranchised.

Without a dramatic, exemplary crushing of the Asseyos and Avincanes to calm passions and still tongues, the Jewish community could not by itself satisfactorily and peacefully resolve its internal problems. Communal government could not function properly. In June 1327 a representative of the *aljama*, probably Jaffia Aborrabe, told the king that when the community met to hold elections or pass

⁹¹ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 221 (22 April 1327): "Noveritis nos de speciali gratia elongasse Gentonum Asseihu et Albam uxorem eius, judeos Muriveteris, ac debitores et fideiussores pro eis obligatos et bona eorum a solutione debitorum que debent christianis usque ad quantitatem ducentorum solidorum regaliū Valencie hinc ad duos annos a data presentium inantea continue numerandos . . . quod medietatem ipsorum debitorum in fine primi anni et alteram medietatem in fine secundi anni suis creditoribus solvere teneantur."

⁹² ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 222 (22 April 1327): "quatenus in quibuscumque negociis dictorum judeorum que coram vobis seu vestrum quolibet contingerint suscitari . . . fori et rationis limitem observando eosdem, contra forum in aliquo non gravetis nec gravari etiam permittatis."

needed legislation, “some individual Jews, moved by envy or rancor, oppose themselves to the aforesaid, from which dissensions and disputes among them [the Jews] are fed, and the business of the said *aljama* is often harmfully impeded.” The troublemakers were, by the representative’s account, nameless and classless, their motives seemingly petty. Yet at election time even such petty disputes transcended personal grudges to touch on constitutional issues.

One thing was clear: a Jewish community hopelessly mired in controversy would not be able to amass royal subsidies efficiently. King Jaume therefore acted decisively and reformed the *aljama*’s electoral system in such a way as to maximize political and social stability. On the one hand, he addressed the discontent of the lower classes by affording them some role in communal government. On the other hand, he enhanced the crown’s control over the electoral process and consolidated the power of the oligarchy, at least that of its most scrupulous members. In the new electoral system, the bailiff general was to select two Jews from each class—upper, middle, and lower—who would then elect the *adelantats* and other communal officials for a two-year term. Every two years the bailiff would designate six new electors.⁹³ The bailiff general was not about to choose known rabble-rousers or radical reformers—if such persons existed—from among

⁹³ ACA: C 230: 59r (24 June 1327): “Intelleximus per procuratorem aljame judeorum Muriveteris quod sepe contingit quod cum dicta aljama eligit secretarios, adenantatos, receptores compotorum seu officiales alios, aut ordinat aliquas res utiles ac sibi necessarias, aliqui singulares judei, ducti invidia seu rancore, opponunt se ad predicta, ex quo nutriuntur inter eos dissensiones et rixe, et negocia dicte aljame sepius suscipiunt detrimentum. Quapropter, ad supplicationem dicte aljame nobis exhibitam, vobis dicimus et mandamus quatenus, visis presentibus, eligatis [bailiff general] sex judeos dicte aljame, duos videlicet de manu maiori, duos de mediocri et alios duos de minori, qui per duos annos sequentes eligant secretarios, adenantatos et receptores compotorum et officiales alios ac res necessarias et utiles dicte aljame. Et transactis dictis duobus annis, elegantur alii sex judeos et subsequenter de duobus in duobus annis per vos seu successores vestros, qui in premissis procedant juxta modum superius expressatum.” Assis, *Golden Age*, 97, misinterprets this document, missing the key role of the bailiff general. The new electoral system instituted in the *aljama* of Valencia in April 1327 was similar to that of Morvedre (ACA: C 229: 274r [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: 249–250, no. 188]). One crucial difference, however, was that in Valencia the *aljama*, not the bailiff general, chose the six electors in the synagogue. The necessity of the bailiff’s intervention in the elections of the *aljama* of Morvedre suggests that its political crisis was more severe.

ACA: C 190: 215v (23 June 1327) suggests that Jaffia Aborrabe was the above *procuratorem*; it describes him as having traveled to confer with the king in Barcelona “pro obtinendis aliquibus litteris sive cartis dicte aljame necessariis.” The letter responds to his request to be reimbursed by the *aljama* for the expenses thus incurred.

the lower classes, but individuals who could work together with their social betters for the good of the community (and the good of the royal treasury). At the same time, the presence of four (out of six) lower- and middle-class electors ensured the election of communal officials who would not ignore the real concerns of the overtaxed majority.

Institution of the new system, however, did not signal the end of oligarchy. Humbler Jews accustomed to deferring to the authority and learning of the elite were not likely to elect unlettered political novices to lead them and to perform the crucial tasks of securing privileges and protection from the king and haggling over taxes with his officials. The informal networks of patronage that had tied the poor to the wealthy and had upheld oligarchy these many years were not easily dissolved. Besides, oligarchy had not been all bad; a good number of the oligarchs must have been as socially responsible as Jucef Bonet who, as *adelantat* in 1324, had paid off the *aljama's* 7,000-sous debt by himself.⁹⁴ The main effect of the new system was not to dismantle oligarchy but to open it up somewhat to men from the middle class who by virtue of their conduct in social, business, and religious affairs were widely respected in the community. Bonet Avincanes and the Asseyos, however, did not break into the oligarchy. Choosing any one of them as either an elector or an official would only have exacerbated tensions; they had rubbed too many powerful families the wrong way.

Just before instituting the reformed electoral system, King Jaume had acceded to the *aljama's* request to establish a comprehensive system of internal taxation, which included a wide array of sales-taxes and levies on individual earnings. The *aljama* could use the funds thus collected to defray its numerous expenses and to render ordinary and extraordinary taxes to the royal treasury more quickly. Although this system of internal taxation was intended to last for only six years, it, or some modified version of it, became integral to *aljama* finances.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ ACA: C 373: 173v–174r.

⁹⁵ ACA: C 230: 60r–63v (18 June 1327) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 408–422, no. 8]. King Jaume's prior permission to the *aljama* of Valencia to establish such a system inspired the Jews of Morvedre to make their request. At first the latter had protested that if forced to pay sales-taxes on their transactions with the Jews in the capital, they would be contributing to the king's subsidies *dupliciter* (ACA: C 190: 209r [19 June], the king's response to an earlier complaint). Once the *aljama* of Morvedre was authorized to follow the example of Valencia, the Jews of Xàtiva then griped

Once each *aljama* in the kingdom was administering its own particular fiscal system and, soon enough, its own public debt, it became that much more autonomous and resistant to taking direction from any external Jewish institution. Meetings of the board of *aljama* representatives in the capital, which had so often been contentious, seem to have come to an end at around this time.

Like the electoral system, the *aljama*'s new fiscal regime responded to lower-class concerns while upholding oligarchy. Practically every occupational group saw its earnings subject to taxation.⁹⁶ The lowly artisan could not claim that the affluent moneylender was being given a free ride. Sales-taxes of course were regressive, and those levied on the purchase of foodstuffs hit the lower classes harder. Yet, as if to balance this inequity, there was a series of what might be termed "luxury taxes," taxes levied on the purchase of items only the well-to-do could afford: clothing of silk and otter skin, fine household furnishings made of silk and other expensive materials, gold thread, and strings of pearls. Furthermore, maidens, widows, and poor old men were exempted from the head tax of one diner collected from every Jew at the end of each month. Such Jews would rely on the charity of the community, which by then was administering a charitable fund (*heqdes*) financed through the pious legacies of individuals. The tensions and animosities which had precipitated the reforms of 1327 may well have forced the elites to recognize the poverty which had helped engender them.

Members of elite families were in fact responsible for administering this system of internal taxation and for auctioning off individual taxes to tax farmers, Jewish or Christian. The administrators designated in 1327 were all oligarchs: Abraham, the son of David Coffe; Benvenist Coffe; Jaffia Aborrabe; and Jacob Aldoctori. Assuming, like Jaume II, that only the wealthy had the business experience and

about having to pay sales-taxes in both places (C 190: 213r [20 June]). The king responded to both complaints by calling for the revocation of the sales-taxes, but he soon changed his mind. Key Christian municipalities, like Barcelona, Lleida, Tortosa, and Valencia, had already been allowed to institute indirect taxation to raise funds more efficiently, and such *imposicions* became normative for them as well. In both cases, it was the extraordinary taxation associated with Jaume II's Sardinian campaigns that brought about the new fiscal methods (Sánchez, "Evolución," 409–410).

⁹⁶ See chap. 1, where the details of this fiscal plan are used for a treatment of the Jews' economic life.

integrity to run such a system efficiently and honestly, Pere III enjoined ten years later that all four administrators be chosen from among the “major taxpayers.”⁹⁷

Some of the fiscal regulations were intended to discourage Jews from evading or violently opposing the new taxes and their oligarchic administrators. Any Jew favoring the tactics of Bonet Avincanes who dared to attack verbally or physically the collectors or the administrators would incur a fine of ten gold *morabatíns*. The same fine was to be exacted from anyone who deliberately defrauded the system.

Individual Jews were permitted, however, to reach separate agreements with the tax collectors whereby they would pay one lump sum instead of being taxed for each transaction. Affluent Jews were the ones most likely to have bothered seeking such special arrangements, and they may well have benefited from them—but only slightly. The tax farmers, whose profits depended on taxing the rich as well as the poor, would not have given them much of a break. The new system of internal taxes, then, did not inordinately favor the wealthy, but it did give them control over another area—a very important area—of communal government.⁹⁸

The *aljama* itself, moreover, passed one crucial piece of legislation, which, like the new crown-imposed electoral and fiscal systems, was meant to promote political stability and enhance the authority of communal government. It issued an ordinance forbidding all Jews to challenge the assessments of the four communal tax assessors, on penalty of 100 *morabatíns*. The ordinance would hopefully stem the tide of complaints of “excessive taxation” to the king and thus reduce the factionalism, conspiracy, and informing which had plagued the community in recent years.⁹⁹

In more favorable circumstances the measures of king and *aljama* might have effected lasting peace and smooth government in the Jewish community. But Alfons III (1327–1336) squeezed the Jews even more than his father had, while agrarian difficulties crippled

⁹⁷ ACA: C 861: 168v–169r (11 February 1337): “ex majoribus peytariis . . . possint ponere inter judeos dicte aljame sisam.”

⁹⁸ ACA: C 230: 60r–63v (18 June 1327).

⁹⁹ ACA: C 381: 227v–228r (3 August 1327) addresses the plea of Jucef Minal who feared incurring the heavy penalty because, absent from Morvedre when the ordinance was passed, he had unwittingly complained about the *aljama*’s taxation of him. Jucef’s plea indicates that communal officials were determined to enforce the ordinance.

the borrowers and taxpayers on whose timely payments Morvedre's Jewish lenders and tax farmers depended.¹⁰⁰ Almost all the extraordinary subsidies Alfons demanded from Valencian Jewry were in some way related to financing a crusade against Granada, which he and Alfonso XI of Castile planned but which never materialized. Conflict with the Genoese also required expenditure. The sums yielded by the crown's Jews comprised a significant portion of royal revenues throughout the reign of Alfons.¹⁰¹ The ordinary taxes of the Jews of Morvedre, however, did not go into the king's treasury but into that of his new queen, Princess Leonor of Castile. In 1328 Leonor received, as part of her marriage portion, jurisdiction over and the ordinary revenues of Morvedre, Castelló, Xàtiva, Morella, and Alzira.

This division of the taxes paid by the Jews of Morvedre continued into the reign of Pere III (1336–1387), until the death of Queen Leonor in 1359.¹⁰² Like his father, Pere maintained the executive

¹⁰⁰ The years 1324–29, 1333–34—the so-called and perhaps mislabeled *mal any primer*—and 1340–47 were all times of scarcity. See A. Rubio Vela, “A propósito del *mal any primer*. Dificultades cerealísticas en la Corona de Aragón en los años treinta del siglo XIV,” in *Estudios dedicados a Juan Peset Aleixandre*, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1982), 3: 475–487; *idem*, “Crisis agrarias y carestías en las primeras décadas del siglo XIV. El caso de Valencia,” *Saitabi*, 37 (1987), 131–147; and *idem*, “De l'expansió a la crisi,” in *Història*, 2: 185–188.

¹⁰¹ M. Sánchez Martínez, “La fiscalidad catalanoaragonesa y las aljamas de judíos en la época de Alfonso IV (1327–1336): los subsidios extraordinarios,” *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia*, 3 (1982), 112, 117–123; and *idem*, “Evolución,” 410–412. Sánchez is careful to point out, however, that royal cities also made large contributions to the royal coffers and that Christians, in general, were subject to various forms of taxation which did not affect the Jews. For the Valencian case, see his “La contribución valenciana a la cruzada granadina de Alfonso IV de Aragón (1327–1336),” in *Primer Congreso de Historia del País Valenciano*, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1981), 2: 579–598.

¹⁰² Pere, who much disliked his stepmother and her sons, succeeded in having all the grants his father had made them nullified at the Corts of Valencia in 1336. The following year, however, due to his need to remain on good terms with Leonor's brother, Alfonso XI of Castile, Pere had to relent somewhat and agree to a new arrangement with Leonor, which, insofar as it concerned Morvedre and the other Valencian towns, left Leonor with the ordinary revenues and Pere with “jurisdiction, high and low,” over them. See Pere III of Catalonia, *Chronicle*, trans. M. Hillgarth, 2 vols. (Toronto, 1980), 1: 176–179, 210–211 [for the original Catalan, Pere el Cerimoniós, “Crònica,” in *Les quatre grans cròniques*, ed. F. Soldevila Zubiburu (Barcelona, 1971)]; and Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 239–240, 244–247. ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 16, no. 2185 (25 February 1344); and C 661: 30r (4 May 1350) show that the ordinary *peita* revenues were going into the coffers of Queen Leonor or to her creditors. ACA: C 1169: 54r (11 June 1359): after Leonor's death, Pere informs all officials and *aljamas*, Jewish and Muslim, of Xàtiva, Morvedre, Morella, Alzira, Calatayud, and Huesca that he is transferring “totes les sobredites rendes” to his third wife, Elionor of Sicily.

Table 4: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Alfons III*

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1328	83,000 s.b.	Unspecified	Expenses of coronation of King Alfons (33,000 s.b.) Expenses of Alfons' marriage to Princess Leonor of Castille (50,000 s.b.)	24,667 s.b. to Kingdom
1329	30,000 s.b.	Unspecified		17,000 s.b. to Kingdom
1330–1331	32,000 s.b.	Unspecified	Expenses of planned crusade against sultanate of Granada	
1330–1331	48,000 s.b.	Unspecified	Expenses of planned crusade against sultanate of Granada	10,760 s.b. to Kingdom
1333	14,000 s.b.	Unspecified		
1334	35,000 s.b.	Unspecified		
1335	38,000 s.b.	Unspecified		

* The figures for this table are all derived from the data compiled in M. Sánchez Martínez, “La fiscalidad catalanoaragonesa y las aljamas de judíos en la época de Alfonso IV (1327–1336): los subsidios extraordinarios,” *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia* 3 (1982), 93–141.

role in Jewish affairs and collected the more lucrative and much needed extraordinary subsidies.¹⁰³ Pere's goals in the international arena were more ambitious though, and he was frequently at war. Between 1337 and 1343 he assisted Alfonso XI of Castile against the Marinids of Morocco and in the final struggle over the Straits of Gibraltar. As part of his policy to bring the Crown of Aragon's various Mediterranean possessions under more effective Catalan control, he conquered and annexed the kingdom of Mallorca in 1343.

Pere, however, taxed the Jews less heavily than his predecessors had. He recognized that the pickings to be gotten from the kingdom's Jewish communities were, after over a half-century of onerous taxation, necessarily slimmer. Within this framework of lesser expectations, the king and his treasurers also realized that the *aljama* of Morvedre was undoubtedly the second largest and wealthiest *aljama* in the kingdom, having superseded the Xàtiva community, which had been laid low by the fiscal policies of Jaume II and Alfons III.¹⁰⁴

Attaining second place in the ranking of the royal treasurers was hardly cause for celebration in the *jueria* of Morvedre. The Jews' reaction to the crown's still live interest in their taxable assets was quiet resistance. Indeed, one reason for King Pere's lighter taxation of the Jews of Morvedre was the increasing difficulty royal and *aljama* officials experienced in locating individual Jews and their property. By the reign of Pere III Morvedre's leading Jewish families had raised the distribution and concealment of their assets to the level of a fine art.

¹⁰³ Pere, for instance, admonished the bailiff of Morvedre to treat the Jews well (ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1577 [25 November 1340]); he approved the revocation of some *aljama* ordinances and the enforcement of other ones (CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1596 [27 June 1341]; and C 647: 90v–91r [13 April 1347]); and he permitted the *adelantats* to invoke the death penalty against informers (CR Pere III, caixa 23, no. 3188 [20 November 1346], referring to a privilege he had granted them in the past).

¹⁰⁴ The decline of the *aljama* of Xàtiva was manifest towards the end of Jaume II's reign. Because of its poverty, representatives of the *aljamas* of Morvedre and Valencia agreed in October 1326, when the subsidy for the coming year was apportioned, to pay 1,000 of the 4,000 sous for which it was liable. ACA: C 190: 217r (13 June 1327), and 216v–217r (23 June) are royal instructions to the bailiff general regarding the fulfilment of this agreement.

Table 5: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Pere III (to 1348)

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1338	Unspecified	1,000 s	Unspecified ^a (campaign against Marinids over Straits of Gibraltar?)	Reduction of sum from unspecified “certain quantity”
1342	Unspecified	5,188 s.b.	Unspecified (campaign against Marinids over Straits of Gibraltar?) ^b	Stoppage of all procedure against Jews of Morvedre for outstanding debts (except annuities) to Christians and Muslims ^c
1343–1344	21,166 s.b.	6,350 s.b.	Conquest of Mallorca ^d	Incorporation of <i>aljama</i> of Vila-real into collectory of Morvedre (until 1346) ^e
1346		1,500 s	Allocation to Queen Marie ^f	Stoppage of all procedure against Jews of Morvedre for outstanding debts ^g
1346		1,000 s (annual payment; first mentioned in 1346)	Maintenance fee to knight Lope Alvaro Despejo for tenancy of royal castle of Poyo ^f	
1347	18,000 s.b.	3,000 s.b.	Expenses of marriage to Elionor of Sicily ^h	

^a ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 27, no. 3664 (14 February 1338).

^b ACA: MR 321: 18v (October 1343). In contrast, only 1,000 sous b. were collected from the Jewish *aljama* of Xàtiva (MR 321: 16v).

^c ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1585 (5 March 1342).

^d ACA: MR 320: 22r (April 1343); MR 321: 5v (June 1343); and MR 323: 37r (December 1344).

^e ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 16, no. 2182 (25 February 1344). In 1344 the *aljamas* of the kingdom were still paying the remainder of the subsidy the king had requested in 1343. Unfortunately, very few fiscal records from the 1345–49 period have survived. There are only the entries of July and August 1345, which show that in July 1345 the royal treasurer received 1,000 sous b. from “les demandes per lo senyor Rey fetes a les aljames dels juheus” in 1344. The fact that after 1343 the *aljamas* remained one year behind in their payments to the crown indicates that they were having some difficulty in meeting the king’s demands.

^f ACA: C 640: 65v–66r (26 April 1346): King Pere’s letter to Queen Marie regarding the complaint of Alvaro “quod cum propter assignationem quam vos habetis super aliam judeorum Muriveteris et propter dictorum judeorum maximam paupertatem, dictus miles a dicta aliam retinentiam castri de Poyo quod pro nobis tenet quam in ibi assignatam habet minime assequi valeat seu habere. . .” C 649: 177r (10 December 1347) concerns the complaint of the *aljama* about the situation after the queen’s death. This letter specifies the various sums of money involved.

^g Villagers of Canet, who were the creditors of Samuel Abinafia and of Astruc and Benvenist Coffe, consequently had to wait to be repaid, despite the efforts of the justice of Canet to persuade the justice of Morvedre to proceed against the Jewish debtors. See ACA: C 641: 127r (November 1346).

^h ACA: C 1472: 28v (22 September 1347). Sums collected from the other Jewish *aljamas* were as follows: 10,000 sous from Valencia; 2,000 sous from Xàtiva; 1,000 sous each from Vila-real and Alzira; and 500 sous each from Borriana and Castelló.

Mobility and Evasion

Prior to the second decade of the fourteenth century the Jews of Morvedre and other Valencian towns had scarcely challenged the ruling of Jaume I that the Jews “are ours perpetually,” even if “they flee or go to another ecclesiastical or lay lord” and reside on his or her estates.¹⁰⁵ The only action approximating an escape from the king’s jurisdiction had been the failed effort, in 1290, of certain Jewish landowners to sell their agricultural produce outside of Morvedre and thus beyond the view of the tax assessors.¹⁰⁶ The unrelenting and mounting fiscal pressure exerted by the monarchy, however, finally emboldened Jews to vote with their feet, to act like Christian and Muslim peasants who quit the estates of their seigneurs when the latter or their creditors became too importunate.¹⁰⁷ Though the Jews were usually moving in the opposite direction—that is, from royal towns to seigneurial domains—both they and the peasants were pursuing similar strategies in evading the demands of their lords. What made Jewish mobility possible by the middle of the reign of Jaume II, and increasingly so during the reigns of Alfons III and Pere III, was the growth of seigneurial power in the kingdom.

The seigneurialization of the kingdom, which began in the final years of Jaume I, progressed dramatically during the reigns of his successors, Pere II, Alfons II, and Jaume II. Needing to raise money for foreign exploits and to secure the loyalty of the military elite, the monarchs alienated and sold castles, towns, and *alqueries* to nobles and knights. The dismemberment of the royal patrimony modified noticeably the political landscape of the region between the Palancia

¹⁰⁵ See n. 1.

¹⁰⁶ ACA: C 81: 171r (25 August 1290); see n. 27 for the transcription. It is possible that one Jew of Morvedre, a certain Bolafa, emigrated “ad partes inimicorum nostrorum” in order to escape royal taxation; he left behind property worth 1,400 sous b. (C 83: 96v [28 November 1290]). It is hard to know who the “enemies” might have been—Aragonese lords, Maghriban or Granadan Muslims, the French?

¹⁰⁷ The discussion that follows has benefited from J. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, 1990), 14, 17–20, 56, 89, 188–190; and *idem*, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, 1985), 245. For the actions of Valencian peasants, see A. Furió, *Camperols del País Valencià. Sueca, una comunitat rural a la tardor de l’Edat Mitjana* (Valencia, 1982), 61–65; F. Garcia Oliver, *Terra de feudals. El País Valencià en la tardor de l’Edat Mitjana* (Valencia, 1991), 90–91; E. Guinot, “Los mudéjares de la Valencia medieval: renta y señorío,” *Areas: Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 14 (1992), 34–35; and J. Hinojosa Montalvo, “La renta feudal de los mudéjares alicantinos,” in *Señorío y feudalismo*, 2: 122, 128.

and Millars rivers in the early decades of the fourteenth century. For instance, Jaume II sold the castle at Almenara to don Francesc de Pròixida in 1304, he made Onda and its castle a possession of the new Order of Montesa in 1319, and he ceded the lordship of Sogorb to the noble Lope de Luna in 1325. By the end of his reign the royal patrimony consisted of only thirty or so of the kingdom's most important urban centers, and even within their districts new seigneuries had emerged. In 1305 knights recently endowed with lordships within the *terme* of Morvedre were contending with the municipality over boundaries.¹⁰⁸

The seigneurial regime was further consolidated under Alfons III, as a result of his efforts to persuade Aragonese lords in the kingdom to renounce the use of the *Fuero* of Aragon on their estates. In the Corts of 1329–30 Alfons reached a compromise with them. In return for their recognition of the *Furs* of Valencia as the only law of the realm, Alfons granted to certain important nobles full criminal jurisdiction (*merum imperium*), and to lesser lords the new, so-called “Alfonsine jurisdiction,” which amounted to jurisdiction over all civil and most criminal cases. This compromise enhanced the authority of the lesser nobility in particular but strengthened the hand of the entire military class vis-à-vis the crown.¹⁰⁹ The Corts of 1329–30 also sanctioned for the first time the role of noblemen in the government of royal towns, a clear indication of the ascension of the military elite in the political life of the kingdom.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ ACA: C 134: 238r (6 March 1305): “controversiam que vertitur . . . inter universitatem Muriveteris ex una parte et vicinos eorum tam nobiles quam milites quam alios ex altera super terminis.” C 133: 62v for Almenara; Guinot, *Feudalismo*, 170, for Onda; and Rubio, “De l’expansió a la crisi,” 2: 199, for Sogorb.

¹⁰⁹ Lesser lords possessing the “Alfonsine jurisdiction” could not handle criminal cases requiring the death penalty, mutilation, torture, or perpetual exile. Their lordships could be quite small: a minimum size of fifteen Christian households, or seven Muslim households outside the district of royal towns, or five Muslim households within royal town districts. See S. Romeu Alfaro, “Los fueros de Valencia y los Fueros de Aragón: ‘Jurisdicción Alfonsina,’” *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, 42 (1972), 75–115; *idem*, *Les Corts Valencianes* (Valencia, 1985), 35; A. Alberola Roma, “Los ‘señoríos alfonsinos’ en el Sur del País Valenciano. Aproximación a su estudio,” in *Señorío y feudalismo*, 1: 223–240; and Iborra, *Camp de Morvedre*, 219–220, 227–232, with reference to the lordships of Torres-Torres, Gilet, Serra, and Algar. Not all the nobles agreed to renounce the use of the *Fuero* of Aragon on their lands; in a few places, like the baronies of Xèrica and Xelva, it remained in use until the seventeenth century.

¹¹⁰ R. Narbona Vizcaíno, *Valencia, municipio medieval. Poder político y luchas ciudadanas (1239–1418)* (Valencia, 1995), 29, 38–39, 87–91. Narbona points out, however, that

The Jews' keen discernment of the realignment of political forces in the kingdom encouraged them to move from Morvedre or other royal towns to seigneurial lands. Such changes of residence were for the most part calculated measures, not panicked flights from royal officials, and were further facilitated by the Jews' ability to exploit the ambiguities in royal law. In granting the *Privilegium Magnum* in 1283, Pere II had left a legal loophole through which Jews or other royal vassals might crawl. He ordained that "the inhabitants of the city [Valencia] and places (*locorum*) of the kingdom of Valencia possessing properties in some [other] places (*loca*) in the kingdom should not be obliged to have a lodging or to live or to make personal residence [in these places]."¹¹¹ Hoping to appease the townspeople and to prejudice the rural lords then making trouble for him, Pere's intention was to enable the citizens of royal towns to own or rent property in seigneuries without residing on them and without the liability to render seigneurial dues to local lords. Yet, since the statute was not at all clear whether the *loca* referred to were royal or seigneurial, the Jews could interpret the statute either as Pere had intended or as permitting them to hold property in the district of a royal town without residing in the town, and perhaps even while residing on the estate of a noble. If they acted in accordance with this last interpretation and were simply not around to pay royal taxes, their theoretical status as the king's own, regardless of place of residence, would be rendered meaningless. It would be left to the king to decide whether he wanted to act on his *de jure* dominion over the Jews and have them, or their fiscal dues, brought back from seigneurial lands.

During the reigns of Jaume II and Alfons III a number of Valencian Jews apparently believed that King Pere's ordinance could be construed as giving them such latitude. Aware of the growing power of the seigneurs, they were more inclined to gamble. In 1314 *aljamas* throughout the kingdom complained that "some Jews" had moved their residences to seigneurial lands in order to avoid paying property taxes. Since property taxes were linked to place of residence, these Jews thought that they could live on the estates of barons and

members of the lesser nobility had participated in the administration of Valencia since 1321 and that the legislation of King Alfons in 1329 formalized their role (29).

¹¹¹ *Aureum opus*, 30v–31r: "Item statuimus et ordinamus quod habitatores civitatis et locorum regni Valencie habentes hereditates per aliqua loca regni: non teneantur tenere hospicium nec habitare vel facere residentiam personalem in aliquo castro, villa, turri aut qualibet alia fortitudine nisi in loco ubi ipsi voluerint. . . ."

knights while retaining their properties and business interests tax-free in the town nearby. The seigneurs themselves, always on the lookout for new tenants and sources of revenue, had become the all-too-willing accomplices of the Jews in this game of tax evasion. It was easy enough for them to allow the Jewish moneylenders and retail merchants, who already frequented their estates, to stay on for an extended period in a rented or purchased dwelling. The king, however, was not impressed by the canniness of these Jews, and in June he instructed the bailiff general to "eject" them from the sphere of royal protection and to punish them.¹¹² They were, after all, challenging the king's unique lordship over them. In December he issued additional orders to the lieutenant of Prince Jaume, the *procurator* of the kingdom: he should bring the wayward Jews before the secretaries of their respective *aljamas* to render the taxes they owed. The secretaries were themselves empowered to impose the ban (*nitduy*) on those Jews who continued to be recalcitrant.¹¹³

Having been forced to subsidize King Jaume's expeditions on a massive scale in the early 1320s, many Valencian Jews were prepared by 1326 to risk arousing his ire again by abandoning royal *jueries*.¹¹⁴ This time it was mainly the *aljamas*' wealthiest members (*de*

¹¹² ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 39, no. 4913 (3 June 1314): "Quare vobis [bailiff general] dicimus et mandamus quatenus nisi dicti judei solverint in peytis et aliis exactionibus cum aliis judeis nostris, prout tenentur et debent, ex tunc a nostra protectione eiciatis eosdem et puniatis ipsos in personis et bonis prout inveneritis faciendum, ita quod sit aliis . . . exemplum."

¹¹³ ACA: C 155: 260r (13 December 1314). See also the cases from Catalonia and Aragon proper discussed by Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 137–138; and *idem*, *Golden Age*, 45–46 n. 213, 167–169. Regarding the transfer of Jews to baronial lands in these territories, the king seems to have been more permissive, no doubt because Catalan and Aragonese noble houses were more established and much more powerful than their Valencian counterparts. (On the relative weakness of the Valencian nobility, see A. Furió, "Senyors i senyories al País Valencià al final de l'Edat Mitjana," *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 8 [1997], 119–132.) I do not concur, however, with the contention of Assis (*Golden Age*, 167) that "[t]he king . . . lost nothing, since the financially weakened community continued to pay the same tax as before." The king may well have requested the same subsidies, but he granted ever larger remissions to the Valencian *aljamas* after 1312. He certainly recognized that the movement of Jews from royal *aljamas* to seigneurial lands would necessitate granting larger remissions to the former.

¹¹⁴ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 135, no. 394 (16 February [1327]) is a letter of Joan Escribà, the bailiff general, to the king advising him of the dire financial situation of the *aljamas* from which he was then demanding a subsidy of 33,000 sous: "Senyor, sapia la vostra altea que l'aljama dels juheus de la ciutat de Valencia tramet a nos senyor lur sindich per suplicar e clamar merçe que en la demanda que per vos senyor los es demandada placia a vos senyor fer gracia e merçe e

potentioribus ipsarum) who were transferring their residences to the lands of noblemen within and even outside of the kingdom. Prince Pere, count of Ribagorza and Empuries, had invited Jews to his estates in the kingdom of Valencia, which included the Vall d'Uixó. Some Jews from Morvedre accepted his invitation.¹¹⁵ In a letter of 11 July 1326 the prince tried to persuade his father not to dispatch officials to compel the Jews to return to royal towns and pay taxes for their properties there. He assured him that the Jews who had moved to his lands were not from among the wealthy. Even if King Jaume forgave his son's new Jewish vassals, those sitting in new *domicilia* on the estates of other lords were not to be permitted to escape taxation while holding property in royal towns and using their liquid assets to make usurious loans to townspeople.¹¹⁶ Yet, despite his previous orders to the bailiff general and other officials to take action against these Jews, some of them had not budged from the seigneurs' lands by the time Prince Pere made his request.¹¹⁷

The political weight of his alliances with certain lords in fact dissuaded King Jaume from vigorously pursuing crown Jews who had taken refuge on their lands. The new Order of Montesa, for example, was consistently favored by Jaume, becoming one of the pillars of the monarchy in the kingdom. Once the Order acquired Onda in 1319, the local commander fostered Jewish settlement there, at

encara en la particio que es feyta de la demanda entre les aljames de la vostra senyoria e sia cert senyor a vos que si gracia no'ls fets e merçe que la dita aljama ne les altres del Regne de Valencia bonament no poran complir a la demanda." As representatives of the *aljama* of Valencia informed Escrivà, some members had already left the city.

¹¹⁵ ACA: C 189: 178v–179r (5 August 1326) concerns adjudication of the "causis et questionibus sarracenorum et judeorum Vallis de Uxone quas in dicta villa [Morvedre] ipsi habeant seu habebunt." As there was no established Jewish community in the Vall d'Uixó, clearly the Jews residing there and litigating in Morvedre were originally from Morvedre. Furió, "Senyors i senyories," 115 n. 11, lists the Valencian holdings of Prince Pere which also included Gandia, Dénia, and Xàbia.

¹¹⁶ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 134, no. 173 (11 July 1326).

¹¹⁷ ACA: C 187: 276r (17 May 1326); and C 189: 143v (24 July 1326). In the latter letter to the bailiff general, Jaume refers to his previous command to him, at the behest of the Valencian *aljamas*, "super compellendis judeis locorum nobilium quorumcumque infra regnum Valencie sitorum ad contribuendum cum eis in quibuscumque talliis, questiis, exaccionibus et contributionibus regalibus eorundem pro bonis sedentibus et mobilibus ac debitis que habent infra loca collectarum dictarum aljamarum nostrarum." Here the king points out that this order was not supposed to apply to Jews of the *aljama* of Borriana, then pertaining to the *camera* of Queen Elicenda.

the expense, of course, of crown *aljamas*.¹¹⁸ In 1327 the commander protested that the bailiff general was violating the Order's privileges by exacting royal taxes and contributions to the *aljamas*' subsidies from Jews "living there [Onda], who for reason of marriage and otherwise leave Onda, live for some time in our [the king's] towns, and afterward return to the said town of Onda," and from "other Jews who recently transferred their domiciles to the said town of Onda from our [royal] towns." King Jaume would not permit his officials to take actions that were prejudicial to the Order.¹¹⁹ Small wonder, then, that a Jew of Morvedre like Mossé Asseyo, who had a good number of political enemies in his hometown and who was already commercially active in villages near Onda, moved there within a few years.¹²⁰

A variant of strategic flight to seigneurial domains was relocation from one royal town to another. Jews would retain substantial holdings in their original place of residence and, counting on the at least temporary ignorance of the officials of their new town and *aljama*,

¹¹⁸ ACA: C 23: 8v (1274); and C 48: 7v (28 April 1280) both show that there were some Jews in Onda paying royal taxes when the town was a possession of the Knights Templars (until the dissolution of this Order in 1312—see Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 193–196). In 1321 the commander of the Order of Montesa at Onda objected to the interference of the bailiff general in criminal cases involving local Muslims and Jews (ACA: C 173: 25v–26r [29 April]; again in 1323—C 177: 140r–v [18 March]). E. Guinot Rodríguez, "Organització i estructuració del poder al si d'un Orde Militar: el cas de l'Orde de Montesa (segles XIV–XV)," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 25 (1995), 183–184, calculates, on the basis of an inventory effected by the Master of the Order in 1320, that there were 600 Christian households in Onda, and 180 Muslim households in the *moreria* of Onda and the *alquerias* of Tales and Artesa. The inventory makes no reference to a Jewish presence, though clearly there were Jews there by the following year.

¹¹⁹ ACA: C 190: 97r–v (24 April 1327): "vos [bailiff general] . . . compellit . . . tam illos judeos in ibi habitantes, qui ratione matrimonii et alias a dicto loco de Onda recedunt et habitant per aliquod tempus in locis nostris et postmodum revertuntur ad dictum locum de Onda, quam alios judeos, qui ad dictum locum de Onda de locis nostris sua noviter transferunt domicilia ad solvendum in peyitis et missionibus aljamarum nostrarum."

¹²⁰ On the political problems of Asseyo in Morvedre, see above in this chapter. ACA: C 371: 204r–v (8 November 1322) treats the plea of Asseyo [here "Sayon"] that while he was in Artana with "aliquibus mercimoniiis," a Jew of Onda filed a complaint against him with the lord of Artana, who proceeded to arrest him and demand 150 sous from him. C 373: 203v (7 May 1325) concerns his moneylending to the Muslims of Toga. CR Pere III, caixa 2, no. 148 (19 April 1336) describes Asseyo as "judeo Onde." Another Jew of Onda mentioned in this letter is Abraham Algehen. Other members of this family lived in Morvedre in the 1320s—Jucef, for instance (CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 94 [1325]).

hope to escape paying taxes for them.¹²¹ One consequence of these movements was the creation of a new *aljama* in the royal town of Llíria by 1320.¹²² It was composed of fiscal refugees from various *aljamas*, including Jucef Coffe and Salamó Avenresch of Morvedre; Vidal Aborrabe later joined them.¹²³ Some Jews, like Jucef Issachi, were soon enough moving in the other direction.¹²⁴ Perplexed *aljama* officials inevitably clashed with erstwhile or new members as they tried to track down and tax their assets. *Aljamas* also found themselves competing for taxable Jewish bodies and, ironically, going so far as to offer tax breaks to lure new members.¹²⁵ The confusion and litigation resulting from all this Jewish mobility hamstrung the *aljamas* in their efforts to gather funds to satisfy the insatiable monarchs.

¹²¹ In 1321 the *aljama* of Xàtiva complained about the relocation of some of its members to Valencia (ACA: C 173: 50v–51r). C 373: 65r–v (23 February 1325) recounts an earlier letter of King Jaume, dated 22 April 1321, regarding the plea of the *aljama* of Valencia about the many Jews who “ad alia loca regni Valencie transferebant sua domicilia, propterquod alie aljame ditabantur et ipsa aljama civitatis Valencie depauperabatur tantum quod vix suficere poterant ad tributas, auxilia . . . tallias comunes . . . exsolvenda.”

¹²² ACA: C 170: 274v (28 November 1320). Here King Jaume accedes to the request of the Jews of Llíria for representation on the tax-assessment board of the kingdom’s Jews.

¹²³ ACA: C 171: 20v–21r (16 December 1320) treats the objections of Coffe and Avenresch to the efforts of the *aljama* of Morvedre to tax them despite their change of residence. King Jaume ruled that the *adelantats* of Morvedre could tax them only “pro bonis que in dicto loco Muriveteris habent.” C 373: 61r–v (25 February 1325) finds Aborrabe registering a plea along with ten other Jews of Llíria regarding its *aljama*’s unjust taxation. He and his grandson Salamó had made a similar complaint in 1322 when still residents of Morvedre (C 371: 233r). Change of residence was no guarantee of lower taxes.

¹²⁴ Despite his move to Morvedre, the *aljama* of Llíria predictably continued to tax him. ACA: CR Alfons III, caixa 5, no. 658 (30 December 1328): “Percepimus relatione nobis facta pro parte Juceffi Issachi, judei Muriveteris quod cum ipse . . . fecisset et etiam nunc faciat residenciam in loco Muriveteris personalem, et ratione ipsius conveniencie sive avinencie solvat et contribuat cum judeis dicti loci Muriveteris, aliam judeorum de Liria, pro eo quia asseritur quod dictus Juceffus tempore dicte conveniencie faciebat residenciam in premissis loco de Liria, compellit et compellere nititur dictum Juceffum ut exsolvat cum aliam Lirie pretextu conveniencie seu avinencie supradicte in dampnum ipsius et prejudicium manifestum.”

¹²⁵ M.R. McVaugh, *Medicine Before the Plague: Practitioners and Their Patients in the Crown of Aragon, 1285–1345* (Cambridge, 1993), 56, 195, points out that in 1329 the *aljama* of Morvedre offered a physician from Valencia, Abraham Tauell, a lifetime tax exemption in an unsuccessful effort to attract him to Morvedre. A physician was obviously a special case. Even so, the *aljama* would, in the 1340s, lure Jucef Lobell from Castelló to Morvedre with a tax break (ACA: C 642: 200r). Lobell was not a physician.

Hence an outraged Alfons III demanded in 1329 that his officials confiscate all the property located in the royal domain belonging to any evasive Jew who was not contributing his or her share of royal subsidies.¹²⁶ Four years later he forbade all Jews to change their place of residence, and then ordered them to make “manifestations” of their assets, including profits from moneylending. The Jews of Morvedre, however, were exempted from the latter order, as were all Jews living in towns under the jurisdiction of Queen Leonor. The order, in any case, seems to have caused the flight of even more Jews from royal towns; hence in February 1335 Alfons agreed to revoke it, though for a price.¹²⁷

The *adelantats* of Morvedre informed King Pere on his accession just how miserably his father’s efforts to immobilize his Jewish subjects had failed. They obtained from him authorization to excommunicate, “according to their rite,” those Jews who were moving their homes from Morvedre to seignorial lands and so shirking their fiscal responsibilities.¹²⁸ Yet the threat of communal ban, to the extent that it helped, hindered only one kind of strategic migration. The next year the king wrote to his bailiff general of the “paucity and poverty of the Jews living in the said town,” because of the reloca-

¹²⁶ ACA: CR Alfons III, caixa 7, no. 898 (17 September 1329). See at n. 6 for a partial transcription and translation.

¹²⁷ ACA: C 527: 139r–v (1 July 1333): “vol e mana lo dit senyor Rey sots pena de cors e daver que negu juheu o juhia no mut son domicili ne ço del seu dels lochs on ara habiten”; and C 487: 209r (15 November 1333). These and similar orders are transcribed in F. de Bofarull, “Los dos textos catalán y aragonés de las ordinaciones de 1333 para los judíos de la Corona de Aragón,” *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*, 7 (1913–1914), 153–163; and summarized in Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: 273–276, no. 201. ACA: CR Alfons III, caixa 33, no. 3826 (14 November 1333) is another version of these orders. Sánchez, “Fiscalidad catalanoaragonesa,” 107–108, treats the revocation of the order in 1335, and, 113–114, the prohibition of Jewish change of residence.

¹²⁸ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 26, no. 3577 (15 May 1336): “Ad suplicationem pro parte aljame judeorum Muriveteris humilem nobis factam adelantatis dicte aljame presentibus et qui pro tempore fuerint concedimus per presentes quod possint juxta ritum eorum aliam suam seu nitduy imponere seu jactare adversus judeos quoscumque qui recesserunt vel recedent decetero convicinio aljame predictae et ad loca nobilium vel militum sua domicilia transtulerunt seu transtulerint et in questis, peyitis et aliis exactionibus regalibus aljame prefate partem eos contingentem solvere renuerunt prout per taxatores aljame eiusdem taxati fuerint ad premissa nec non ipsa aljama possit vit fortiter contra judeos predictos dicta aljama seu nitduy juxta ordinationem adenantatorum superius contentorum.” ACA: C 858: 116r is the registered copy of this letter.

tion of still more Jews from Morvedre to Valencia, Xàtiva, Castelló, and Borriana.¹²⁹

Legally the root of the problem remained the Jews' deliberately broad interpretation of the ambiguous language in Pere II's 1283 statute. In 1346 Jucef Lobell asserted forthrightly: "according to ancient use and custom observed in the kingdom of Valencia . . . Jews of the said kingdom should not be held to contribute [taxes] for any properties they have in places (*locis*) of the said kingdom except in the place (*loco*) where they have their domicile." King Pere acknowledged Jucef's argument as valid because Jucef had recently moved to Morvedre from Castelló, at that juncture a lordship, and had paid taxes "for all his property" with Morvedre's *aljama*.¹³⁰ But the knot-tier issue was dealing with Jews who continued to interpret the established "custom" in the contrary sense and so moved either to seigneurial lands or to other royal towns in the hope of hoodwinking local tax assessors and collectors, or at least of throwing in their path barricades manned by rival royal or seigneurial officials jealous of their

¹²⁹ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 26, no. 3617 (1 May 1337): "Ex parte aliam judeorum Muriveteris fuit nobis expositum quod aliqui judei qui in dicto loco residentiam faciebant et contribuebant cum dicta aliam in preiudicium ipsius transtulerunt sua domicilia ad civitatem Valencie, Xative, Castilionis, Burriane et ad alia loca sic quod dicta aliam peytas et subsidia quas nobis solvere debent sustinere non possunt propter paucitatem et paupertatem judeorum predictorum habitantium in dicta villa."

¹³⁰ Jucef was objecting to the continued taxation of his holdings in Castelló by the local bailiff. ACA: C 640: 94r (5 May 1346): "Sua nobis Juceffus Lobell, judeus ville Muriveteris, humili supplicatione monstravit quod quamquam ex usu seu consuetudine antiqua in Regno Valencie observata que per regias litteras extitit, ut dicitur, confirmata et observari mandata judei dicti Regni non teneantur contribuere pro aliquibus bonis que in locis dicti Regni habent nisi in loco ubi sua tenent domicilia, et prelibatus judeus pro omnibus bonis suis contribuerit cum aljama ville Muriveteris ubi domiciliatus existit, verum tamen baiulus ville Castilionis Campi de Burriana contra dictum usum seu consuetudinem et tenorem litterarum regiarum predictorum prefatum judeum in dicta villa Castilionis pro bonis que ibidem tenet contribuere compellit in ipsius non modicum damnum ac etiam preiudicium. Quare super hiis a nobis remedio justitie postulato, vobis [governor of Morella] dicimus et mandamus quatenus dictum judeum contra dictum usum seu consuetudinem . . . per baiulum sepefatum aggravari minime permittatis. . . ." Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 37–39; J. Sánchez Adell, "Castellón de la Plana en la Baja Edad Media," *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 49 (1973), 51–57; and V. Sempere, "Revoltes populars a la Plana durant la segona meitat del s. XIV. Aproximació a l'actitut de Vila-real i Castelló en ser separades de la corona," *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 65 (1989), 51–58, show that Castelló did not definitively revert to the royal domain until 1368. At the time of Lobell's plea, it formed part of the patrimony of Queen Leonor, the stepmother of Pere III, and her son Joan, both disliked by Pere.

jurisdictional prerogatives.¹³¹ Whether or not the king was going to challenge the Jews' interpretation and assert, without ambiguity, royal lordship over them depended less on legal hairsplitting and more, as both he and the Jews recognized, on the realities of power.

In 1337 King Pere introduced several measures intended to curtail Jewish migration and to alleviate its deleterious effects on individual *aljamas*. He began by ordering that every Jew in the kingdom, regardless of the royal town in which he or she might be residing, be assessed for taxation according to his or her means. Thus, when he sought subsidies from his Jews, he would not be asking the *aljama* of Morvedre to make payments on behalf of Jews who no longer lived in the town.¹³² The key to resolving at least some of the *aljamas*' financial difficulties was to apportion royal taxes among them in a manner that was commensurate with the current geographic distribution of the Jewish population. On 30 July Pere urged his vice-chancellor, treasurer, and bailiffs of Valencia, Catalonia, and Aragon to do just that, for "unless they are taxed equally and moderately, these *aljamas* can easily come to irreparable destruction."¹³³

These measures were fairly safe, since they involved only royal towns. Another measure taken that same summer proved riskier.

¹³¹ Historians of Valencian Christian peasants have emphasized the peasants' frequent change of residence and dispersal of landholdings with the intention of evading at least some of their obligations to their lords. See Furió, *Camperols*, 169; and Garcia, *Terra de feudals*, 91, who discusses the efforts of seigneurs to restrict the mobility of peasants, because the latter "thus surreptitiously eluded contributions on each one of the seigneuries where they had residence and property." Guinot, *Feudalismo*, 357, points to the attempt of the Order of Montesa "to prevent the residents of the towns of the Order from acquiring houses in royal towns and . . . seeking to become residents of royal towns, when in reality they had the greater part of their patrimony in the seigneurial town." This is the mirror image of the attempt of royal and *aljama* authorities in Morvedre to prevent local Jews from establishing residence on seigneurial lands.

¹³² ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 26, no. 3617 (1 May 1337). This measure was taken in response to the complaint of the *aljama* of Morvedre; see n. 129 for the beginning of the letter.

¹³³ ACA: C 1054: 116r (30 July 1337): "Cum nos ex causis rationalibus atque justis videlicet propter onera tributorum que aljama [sic] judeorum dictorum regnorum et Cathalonie nobis anno quolibet parare tenentur . . . nisi equaliter et moderate taxentur possent ipse aljame de facili ad destructionem irreperabilem devenire per vos compartimentum predictorum tributorum inter dictas aljamas taxari providerimus et velimus. Ideo dicimus, comittimus et mandamus quatenus . . . compartimentum predictorum tributorum ad tempus certum prout ad utilitatem dictarum aljamarum videbitur faciendum faciatis et ordinetis prout rationabiliter inveneritis faciendum."

Pere tried to separate those Jews who had relocated to seigneurial lands but retained possessions in the royal domain from those who were, *de jure* and *de facto*, residents of royal towns. He commanded the bailiff general to compel such seigneurial Jews (*judei extranei*), who in many respects still regarded themselves as members of royal *aljamas*, to remove their goods from royal lands. A roundabout way of forcing these *judei extranei*, whom he in effect acknowledged to be no longer his own, to reside in royal *jueries* and to become his again, it had the potential to antagonize prominent nobles. Thus when the Jews of Sogorb complained, the king backed down, for he did not want to alienate the powerful Luna family, lords of Sogorb since 1325.¹³⁴ Some of these Jews of Sogorb, just up the Palancia River from Morvedre, had probably come from Morvedre and kept property there.¹³⁵

Efforts to retrieve Morvedre's migrating Jews from two of their favorite haunts, Vila-real and the Vall d'Uixó, were also hampered by complications.¹³⁶ Both places were crown possessions but both at times became the personal holdings of members of the royal family. At such times King Pere was put in an awkward position, as he could not insist that Jews return to Morvedre from places belong-

¹³⁴ ACA: C 1054: 112v (23 July 1337): "fecistis [bailiff general] preconizari publice in civitate Valencie quod judei extranei habentes bona in locis nostris realen-chis infra certum tempus extraherent ipsa bona ex mandato nostro litteratorie vel facto." This letter was a response to the protest of the Jews of Sogorb. Pere ordered the bailiff not to proceed against them since he wished to deliberate further on the matter.

¹³⁵ There were, for example, Jews of Morvedre like Isaac Abenafrit, who had been lending money to the Muslims of Altura, a village close to Sogorb (ACA: C 173: 51r-v [2 May 1321]).

¹³⁶ See n. 115 for earlier emigration from Morvedre to the Vall d'Uixó. Regarding strategic relocation to Vila-real, consider, for instance, Salamó Coffe, who had departed Morvedre because of allegedly oppressive taxation and then returned home again in 1341: "Salamon Cofen, judeus olim habitator dicte ville [Morvedre] nunc vero comorans in Villa de Regali, quod ipse eo quia per aliamam judeorum dicte ville Muriveteris opprimebatur diversimode contra justiciam in taxationibus et contributionibus eorundem transtulit se de dicta villa ad locum Ville Regalis predictum in quo per tempus aliquod fecit residenciam personaliter. Cum autem, ut asseritur, dictus judeus eo quia de villa predicta Muriveteris oriundus existit intendat ad villam ipsam redire causa inibi comorandi" (ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1541). ACA: C 640: 121v refers to "aliqui judei ville Muriveteris et terminorum eius" who had moved to Vila-real during the previous five years. AM Vila-real, no. 205, Claveria de Pere Colomer (1348-49) [Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 289-290] records the loans of Aaron and Abraham Hincanes (or Avincanes) to the municipality. They were probably related to the Avincanes family of Morvedre.

ing to his relatives and producing revenue for them. The Jews, on the other hand, while maintaining economic interests and family ties in Morvedre, could more easily take advantage of new opportunities in these localities.

Pere therefore astutely incorporated the *aljama* of Vila-real into the tax-collectory of the *aljama* of Morvedre. Yet he had not been able to act until he recovered Vila-real from his uncle, Prince Pere, in 1344.¹³⁷ And only two years later, when Vila-real became a possession of Queen Marie, the king was again hamstrung. Not only was Vila-real removed from Morvedre's collectory but, at the instance of his queen, he exempted her Jewish vassals in Vila-real from his provision of February 1346 ordering all Jews who had left Morvedre in the last five years to return home or face a heavy fine.¹³⁸ These Jews would now pay their taxes to the queen's officials, who were probably not fully informed about the Jews' assets in Morvedre and environs.

Queen Marie had also acquired rights to the revenue from the Vall d'Uixó, and she persuaded her husband to except its Jewish

¹³⁷ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 16, no. 2182 (25 February 1344): "Tenore presentis volumus et concedemus vobis aliame judeorum Muriveteris quod cum locus de Villa Regali, quem . . . recuperaverimus a dicto infante [Pere, count of Ribagorza], judei dicti loci de Villa Regali sint de contributione vestra solvantque vobiscum et contribuant in peytis, subsidiis, exactionibus et tributis dum de nostre processerit beneplacito voluntatis." King Pere must have been well aware that a number of the Jews of Vila-real had emigrated from Morvedre in recent years, for he himself, while still a prince, had first organized the Jewish families of Vila-real into an *aljama* in May 1335. See Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 258–259, 288–289. They estimate that Vila-real had a population of approximately 1,700 Christians and 51 Jews.

¹³⁸ ACA: C 640: 69r (28 April 1346) contains the text of Pere's provision of 11 February 1346: "Cum nos cum alia littera nostra mandaverimus preconizari et publicari in dicta villa quod omnes judei et judee cuiuscumque conditionis existant qui et que a quinque annis proxime lapsis citra de dicta villa sua domicilia ad alia loca transtulerunt ad villam ipsam intra octo dies a die preconizationis predictae inantea numerandos continue redeant et transfereant cum familiis, domiciliis ac bonis et rebus omnibus eorundem, sic quod ex tunc ibi resideant et foveant lares continue sub pena [(?)centorum morabitanorum auri nostro erario aplicandorum. . . ." ACA: C 640: 121v (23 May 1346) is Pere's response to his queen's complaint.

Officials of the *aljama* of Valencia raised another objection to King Pere's order. They pointed out that Jewish men of Morvedre who had moved to Valencia and married local girls had promised not to take their wives from Valencia to reside elsewhere: "quod aliqui judei dicte ville [Morvedre] contraxerunt in dicta civitate [Valencia] sub ista condicione, quod eorum uxores non possent a predicta civitate pro facienda personali residencia extrahere, quod sub juramento per eos prestituto, ut dicitur, servare promisserunt." Pere decided that men bound by this oath should be exempted from his order (ACA: C 880: 176v–177r [23 May 1346]).

inhabitants as well from his February provision.¹³⁹ For the Jews of Morvedre who had shrewdly established *de jure* “personal residence” in the Vall d’Uixó under the protection of Prince Pere or Queen Marie, the valley had the additional benefit of not having a Jewish *aljama* to meddle in their affairs. Even after Queen Marie’s death in 1347 the coming and going of Jews between Morvedre and the Vall d’Uixó continued.¹⁴⁰ In 1348 there was a series of lawsuits pitting Jews of Morvedre against “Jews of the Vall d’Uixó.”¹⁴¹ One of the litigants from Uixó, David Coffe, whom a royal letter described as a Jew of Morvedre as recently as 27 April, complained in June that the *aljama*’s tax collectors had “maliciously and fraudulently” sold the lease to his house in the *jueria* of Morvedre.¹⁴² David Coffe and other Jews of Morvedre had created for fiscal convenience a new community of “Jews of the Vall d’Uixó.” But the community was fictitious, since for all intents and purposes the Jews of the Vall d’Uixó were really Jews of Morvedre.

When scattering their holdings and changing residence, the Jews of Morvedre did not need to travel as far north as Vila-real and Onda, or even as far as the Vall d’Uixó. They encountered opportunities closer to home on the estates of nobles and knights located within or adjacent to the *terme* of Morvedre. A good number of these lordly families had, and were to have, sustained and sometimes close

¹³⁹ ACA: C 640: 69r (28 April 1346): King Pere exempts “judeos habitantes in villa de Uxon a predicta compulsione” for a period of two months; and in 122r (30 May) he confirms his previous order “quod judei locorum predictorum [Vila-real and the Vall d’Uixó] ad faciendum residenciam personalem ac contribuendum cum judeis aliame dicte ville [Morvedre] in personis et bonis minime compellantur.” He repeated the order yet again on 8 July (ACA: C 881: 21v).

¹⁴⁰ This can be explained partly by the fact that after Queen Marie’s death, the Jewish communities of Vila-real and the Vall d’Uixó (to the extent that the latter was a “community”) became the possessions of the princesses Joanna and Constança. See the reference in ACA: C 644: 171v [beginning of document], 161r (19 August 1351).

¹⁴¹ ACA: C 652: 70v (6 May 1348): “Ad supplicationem propterea nobis factam per judeos vallis d’Uxo et ex quibusdam causis suspicionum veris, justis et rationalibus in nostro consilio per partem proponitis et examinatis, nos ad cognitionem quarumcumque causarum inter eos et judeos dicte ville [Morvedre] motarum seu movandarum Johannem Munionis causidicium eiusdem ville duxerimus adiungendum.”

¹⁴² ACA: C 653: 78v (3 June 1348): “David Cofen, judeus loci d’Uxon, olim habitator Muriveteris, nobis exposuit querelose quod alqui collectores callis judeorum dicte ville, ipso David absente et non vocato, fecerunt maliciose et fraudulenter venditionem loguerii cuiusdam hospitii dicti conquerentis. . . .” C 652: 76r–v (27 April 1348) concerns the plea of David and his brothers, Maymó and Jahudà, “judeorum dicte ville [Morvedre],” regarding certain houses left by their deceased father.

relations with the Jews of the town: the Bellpuig of Torres-Torres, the Pròixida of Almenara, the Vallebrera of Petrés, and the Munyós of Quart.¹⁴³ Eager to populate and ensure the productivity of their estates, they too had long welcomed tenants and investors of whatever faith.

In 1347 and 1348 the revolt of the Aragonese and Valencian Unions prevented King Pere from dealing forcefully with the problem of Jewish migration to and from Morvedre and other royal towns. With the monarchy at stake, tracking down Jewish subjects was far from the top of his agenda. Pere, moreover, could not afford to antagonize any of the nobles and knights of his Valencian kingdom, since they comprised the great majority of the royalist forces fighting the armies of the Union. Hence, in contrast to his more vigorous commands to royal officials in 1346, in 1348 he relied on the *aljama* of Morvedre itself to discipline evasive taxpayers. He empowered it to excommunicate all Jews who lived in Morvedre more than thirty days consecutively without paying their share of taxes.¹⁴⁴ Once he defeated the Union, Pere would take the offensive and demand in 1351 that even Jews of Vila-real and the Vall d'Uixó who had emigrated from Morvedre since 1347 be compelled to transfer to Morvedre within thirty days.¹⁴⁵ Yet, as will be seen, the efforts of the triumphant monarch would also have mixed results.¹⁴⁶

In their various peregrinations Jews from Morvedre often had business and resided in towns and villages which were partially or entirely Muslim. Although the sources reveal little about the interaction of Jews and Muslims in these localities, the implications of what must have been frequent and prolonged contacts between them are worth considering. In the decades subsequent to the conquest of the region

¹⁴³ See chap. 5 and Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, for details on the contacts between these seigniorial families and Jews of Morvedre. In general terms, it is significant that in a letter of June 1351 demanding the return of former Jewish residents of Morvedre to the town, the king ordered the bailiff of Morvedre to have a public proclamation to that effect made "in whatever places subject to your jurisdiction," which of course included the seigneuries within the *terme* of Morvedre (ACA: C 664: 135v).

¹⁴⁴ ACA: C 651: 122r-v (18 February 1348).

¹⁴⁵ ACA: C 664: 171v, 161r (19 August 1351).

¹⁴⁶ On 1 June 1355 the Jews of Morvedre and the Jews of the Vall d'Uixó had to pay jointly a subsidy of 25 pounds to help cover the expenditures to be made by King Pere on his return from Sardinia—ACA: C 1401: 82v. The royal authorities had come to view the two communities almost as one, which indeed they were. See also chap. 5.

the Muslims had often viewed the Jews as foreigners and as allies of the Christian conquerors; the existence and authority of Jewish bailiffs had been a cause of Muslim resentment. After 1283, when this particular annoyance was taken care of and lordly Jews like Jucef Avinçaprut and Aaron Abinafia were but a memory, Muslims would have identified the Jews less with their Christian overlords. While a falling away of social barriers and camaraderie cannot be assumed, the increasing mobility of Morvedre's Jews in the region north of the capital does indicate their facility in traveling through areas heavily populated by Muslims and in dealing with the locals. The Jews, moreover, were often working alone and without the trappings of a royal bailiff. The Jews' readiness to establish themselves in places like the Vall d'Uixó or Onda originated in and contributed to a rapprochement with the Muslims. The few problems arising from their contact with Muslims brought to King Pere's attention had to do less with misunderstanding and conflict than with inappropriate fraternizing. Sol, the married daughter of a Jewish butcher of Morvedre, who had carnal relations with Jews "and even with Saracens and lives daily with the said Saracens," thus became the object of a royal inquiry.¹⁴⁷

Some Muslims, on the other hand, became so attracted to Judaism, as a result of their mingling with Jews, that they converted to the faith of the latter. To prevent such conversions, the kingdom's Muslims sought and obtained from King Pere in 1337 permission to condemn to death all Muslims "perverted to the rite of the Jews." Given the relatively higher status of Jews in the kingdom, social concerns may have been just as compelling as religious ones in inspiring Muslims to abandon their faith for Judaism.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ ACA: C 1054: 174v (9 November 1337): "quedam judea Muriveteris, vocata Sol, filia Calafonis carnicerii judei quondam, non attenta eius lege quam servare tenetur, nec attenta quod virum habet, publice habuit rem carnalem et habet cum aliquibus judeis et etiam sarracenis et cotidie moratur cum dictis sarracenis carnalem cum eisdem copulam commitendo."

¹⁴⁸ ACA: C 862: 121r (12 January 1337): "per çunam eorum sit eis licitum condemnare ad mortem quoscumque sarracenum vel sarracenos ad ritum judeorum perversos" [transcribed in Boswell, *Royal Treasure*, 436–437]. In his discussion, Boswell regards these conversions as "the result of dialogue and conviction" (380–381). Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 184–188, emphasizes Jewish ownership of Muslim slaves as a crucial factor. In purely theological terms, Muslims might have found Judaism more palatable than Christianity, preferring the former's emphasis on the oneness of God to the latter's Trinitarian theology.

The removal of Jews from royal office and their relinquishment of lordship over *alquerías* had not, in fact, altered relations of power in the region to such an extent that Muslims in later decades perceived the Jews to be occupying the same position as themselves with respect to the Christians. Whereas the Muslims still constituted in important respects a distinct political body within the Christian kingdom and were acutely conscious of their religious and political ties with the *dār al-Islām*, the Jews of Morvedre continued to depend on the protection and patronage of, and to cast their lot fully with, the Muslims' Christian overlords, whether royal or seigneurial.¹⁴⁹ If Jewish bailiffs had collected taxes from Muslims prior to 1283, Jewish tax farmers sometimes performed this task in later decades. Jews could not lend money, bid for the leases of seigneurial monopolies and agrarian rents, or collect the debts, fees, and rents that Muslims owed them without the acquiescence, support, and even coercion of Christian lords. Although there had been a palpable reduction in Jewish power after 1283, which contributed to a normalization of Jewish-Muslim relations, the Jews remained allied to the Christian authorities in a way that the Muslims could not be, perhaps not ever. The remarkable geographic mobility of Morvedre's Jews in the first half of the fourteenth century, while evincing a broadening and deepening of their relations with Christian lords and their Muslim peasants, does not obscure the endurance of structures of power articulated in the years following the Christian conquest.

The portrait of the Jewish community of Morvedre in the 1330s and 1340s is rather enigmatic. Signs of communal poverty and fiscal calamity dovetail with evidence of the enterprise of individual Jews.¹⁵⁰ The mobility of the Jews of Morvedre, which often left the *adelantats* at wit's end and the *aljama's* accounts in disarray, testifies, paradoxically, to the Jews' ability to adapt to the straitened circumstances caused primarily by grasping monarchs. It reflects as well their fuller

¹⁴⁹ Compare Y. Assis, "Jewish Attitudes to Christian Power in Medieval Spain," *Sefarad*, 52 (1992), 291–304, with M.T. Ferrer i Mallol, *La frontera amb l'Islam en el segle XIV. Cristians i sarraïns al País Valencià* (Barcelona, 1988), 17–72.

¹⁵⁰ Sánchez, "Fiscalidad catalanoaragonesa," 114, 122, expresses some skepticism regarding the presumed "economic decadence" of the Jewish *aljamas* in the early fourteenth century since the *aljamas* repeatedly managed to respond to the exorbitant fiscal demands of Alfons III. However, in a later article, "Evolución," 412, Sánchez admits that in the 1330s "some signs of the profound crisis of the *aljamas* before the Black Death can be detected."

integration into the life of the kingdom, as they shrewdly worked out mutually advantageous agreements with Christian elites, whether knights controlling peasant hamlets or great lords and princes, and provided essential services to their Christian and Muslim tenants. While the *aljama* staggered along under the burden of royal taxes, some Jewish families moved about the kingdom with impressive facility and political astuteness, spreading assets and evading taxes as they went. The Jewish community of Morvedre had indeed become a kind of regional entity, with investments, properties, political and social connections, family branches, and domiciles dispersed throughout the part of the kingdom north of Valencia city. Morvedre remained the base of the community's Jewish families and the seat of the *aljama*, but the history of its Jews and that of its *aljama* were no longer quite the same thing.¹⁵¹

Poverty Before the Plague

The geographic mobility of some Jews of Morvedre did not enhance social mobility within the Jewish community; if anything, it served to maintain socioeconomic disparities and resentments. Primarily the wealthier Jews had the need, the wherewithal, and the connections to make strategic changes of residence and to live *de facto* in Morvedre

¹⁵¹ This helps to explain documentary evidence from 1348 which, on the face of it, is so contradictory and puzzling. In February 1348 King Pere and the *aljama* were taking steps to deal with the problem of Morvedre's reduced Jewish population. Yet at the end of the year at least forty-five Jewish families sued to be indemnified for property they had lost during the attack of the Union in November. Although it is possible that these families were all who remained after the departure of other families in preceding years, it is not likely that the community had ever been much larger than sixty families. The *adelantats* had not been lying, however, when they complained about the *aljama*'s poverty and the paucity of the *jueria*'s residents. The number of official *de jure*—and taxable—residents was what mattered to the *adelantats* in their endeavor to collect royal taxes, not the total number of Jews in the *jueria*, which included those who officially resided elsewhere but stayed in Morvedre frequently and held property and investments in the town and its *terme*. As far as the king and the *adelantats* were concerned, there were not enough of the former and far too many of the latter. Some of the Jewish families seeking indemnification for property looted or destroyed in Morvedre had probably been officially residing elsewhere in the months prior to the Union's attack. They were "Jews of Morvedre," even if *aljama* officials could not always tax them as such. One of the plaintiffs, Salamó Ballester, who received 2,700 sous as compensation for property lost in Morvedre, is described as "of Llíria" (AMV: Lletres del Rey (1348–56), no. 2 [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 429–433, no. 10]).

but *de jure* elsewhere. Modest Jewish artisans and retailers traveled peddling their wares, but they had neither the capital for investing and dispersing nor the economic profile which would have made them attractive new residents to seigneurial and municipal officials. Humbler Jews felt the bite of royal taxation more keenly because the little they possessed they could not hide.

The difficulties of the humble were compounded by the rise in the price of victuals in years of agricultural shortfall and by the regressive taxes (*cises*) which the *aljama* had been levying on the sale of foodstuffs and other items since 1327. In 1337 and again in 1339 King Pere permitted the *aljama* to double the *cisa* rate—to impose a *sisam duplicatam*—for the purpose of liquidating its debts and subsidizing him.¹⁵² Lower-class discontent grew and manifested itself in various ways. In 1337 two otherwise unknown Jews, Salamó Carnicer and Jacob Alcabali, wounded Jahudà Aldoctori, a member of a leading family whose father Jacob had been one of the *cisa* administrators in 1327.¹⁵³ Some months later the king received a message from “some Jews”—almost certainly humbler ones—that officials would have to arrest them before they would contribute to the latest subsidy. He responded by instructing the *adelantats*, who had again lapsed

¹⁵² ACA: C 861: 168v–169r (11 February 1337): “cupientes erga utilitatem dicte alame utilius providere cum presenti littera nostra concedimus dicte alame . . . sisam seu impositionem duplicatam in vino, carnibus, pannis et mercimoniis et aliis eorum . . . per duos annos continue subsequentes.” The Christian tax farmer who purchased the *cisa* in 1337 was Pere Ermengol. In 1339 the *aljama* treasury was so depleted that the price the tax farmer Berthomeu Malbech intended to pay for the two-year lease of the *cisa* did not suffice to cover royal subsidies and the sums the *aljama* owed to its creditors. The *aljama* therefore received permission to sell the *cisa* to Malbech for a period of four years so that in 1339 it would have twice the amount of revenue to deal with its various obligations. CR Pere III, caixa 27, no. 3732 (17 March 1339): “attamen precium venditionis ipsius sise ad solutionem eorumque debitorum non potest suficere ullo modo . . . Idcirco . . . tenore presentis vobis judeis jamdictis licenciam et auctoritatem plenariam impartimur vendendi sisam ipsius aljame duplicatam post lapsum dictorum duorum annorum [1337–39] ad quatuor annos ex tunc continue subsequentes juxta tenores capitulorum predictorum ac venditionis eiusdem facte Bartholomeo jamdicto per administratores eiusdem . . . ita tamen quod precium ipsius sise convertatur in solutionibus questiarum, peytarum et aliarum exactionum aljame predicte prout retroactis temporibus est fieri assuetum.”

¹⁵³ ACA: C 1054: 176r (7 November 1337). Another poor Jew, Vives Abenfagim, whose arrest was ordered on account of “quibusdam criminibus” (C 1055: 71v), was perhaps also involved in the attack on Jahudà Aldoctori. The latter possibly followed in the footsteps of his father as one of the four *cisa* administrators, who were supposed to be appointed from among the wealthiest families.

into more arbitrary methods of tax assessment, to return to the *per sou e lliura* plan, which, like a graduated income tax, usually lightened the burden of the poor.¹⁵⁴

The elites holding the reins of *aljama* government could not long ignore the distress of the indigent and the recommendations of lower- and middle-class Jews serving on the board of electors. The alms left in the wills of the wealthy clearly did not provide sufficient relief. Hence in 1341 *aljama* officials obtained permission to revoke certain communal ordinances which had once proved useful but now, "on account of poverty," no longer were. The communally administered sales-taxes were, more than anything else, hurting the poor in these hard times; revoking or modifying them would afford the most immediate assistance.¹⁵⁵

Acutely aware of the reduced capability of poor and middling families to pay taxes, *aljama* officials felt all the more frustrated with the evasive tactics of some affluent Jews. They discovered in 1344 that the local bailiff, influenced by Jewish friends, was collecting Queen Leonor's *peita* from some Jews but not from others.¹⁵⁶ In 1345 some Jews practiced such deceit when making declarations of their taxable goods to the *adelantats* that King Pere had to commission a

¹⁵⁴ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 27, no. 3664 (14 February 1338): "Adelantatis aliame judeorum Muriveteris qui nunc sunt. Gratiā suam. Pro parte aliquorum judeorum dicte aliame fuit nobis humiliter demonstratum quod cum ipsa aliama nunc noviter teneatur dare et solvere pro peyta certam quantitatem peccunie, quam quantitatem non possunt ad presens bono modo exsolvere absque captione personarum ipsorum judeorum et magnis sumptibus sive dampnis, fuit nobis humiliter supplicatum ut certam viam sive modum colligendi ipsam peytam vobis concedere dignemur; qua supplicatione admissa, vobis dicimus et mandamus quatenus a dicta aliama seu a judeis eiusdem levetis et colligatis mille solidos regalium qui colligantur per solidum et per libram juxta tatxationem per vos fiendam, quibus collectis et exactis residuam quantitatem seu totum id quod vestro tempore habeant solvere levetis et colligatis per eundem modum juxta facultates cuiuslibet singularium judeorum hocque aliquatenus non mutetis." The solution adopted by King Pere and the fact that the letter was addressed to the *adelantats* leave little doubt that low- and middle-class Jews were the "some" threatening what would have amounted to a tax revolt.

¹⁵⁵ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1596 (28 June 1341): "Expositum fuit nobis pro parte judeorum aliame dicte ville quod ipsa aljama temporibus preteritis fecit interse quasdam ordinationes . . . que quidem ordinationes que ad certum tempus et sub certa pena servari debebant facte fuerunt tanquam illo tunc necessarie et utiles aliame predicte. Cum autem nunc ipsa aliama asserat ordinationes predictas nunc ex quibusdam causis et signanter propter paupertatem seu inopiam ipsorum potius in sui dampnum quam commodum redundare supplicaverint nobis ut absque incursu pene jamdicte eidem aliame revocandi ordinationes predictas licenciam conferamus."

¹⁵⁶ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 16, no. 2185 (25 February 1344).

local notary, Francesc Soler, to investigate.¹⁵⁷ This fraudulent conduct clearly violated *aljama* legislation. Yet the king relented from fining the guilty Jews, since it would only have served to shrink the taxable assets available to an already “poor” *aljama*.¹⁵⁸ Finally, in 1347, on account of the “many disputes” they had been having with evasive families, *aljama* officials, with “the express assent of all Jews, except two or three,” passed an ordinance requiring every Jewish man and woman to reveal his or her assets under oath and to pay taxes accordingly, on pain of communal ban.¹⁵⁹ Another piece of communal legislation authorized *aljama* officials to demand loans from ten, obviously well off, Jews.¹⁶⁰

None could escape the new legislation; fiscal arrangements that communal officials had recently worked out with particular families were abruptly nullified.¹⁶¹ In 1346 the *aljama* had, at the urging of

¹⁵⁷ ACA: C 640: 14v (23 March 1346): “Franciscus Soler, notarius dicte ville, nobis supplicatione humili demonstravit quod cum ipse tanquam scriptor . . . ut subdelegati [sic] a Jacobo de Romanino, gubernatore Morelle, ad inquirendum contra omnes et singulos judeos eiusdem ville, qui in manifestando sua bona anno preterito diversas fraudes, ut dicitur, comiserunt . . .” Soler was complaining that the *aljama* still had not paid his salary or reimbursed him for the expenses he incurred during the investigation. Other Jews, however, did not have to resort to “fraud” to avoid shouldering a fiscal burden they deemed unreasonable. In 1340 Mossé Oblites had made an agreement with the *aljama*’s tax assessors—Astruc Cortovi and David Coffe—whereby, for the next five years, he would pay taxes at a rate of seven pounds for every 1,000 sous of assessed property (that is, a tax rate of 14 percent). In December 1345 Mossé obtained from the king permission to have this arrangement continue for three more years (ACA: C 879: 44r).

¹⁵⁸ ACA: C 880: 142v (3 April 1346): “Nosque compacientes eisdem judeis et intuitu aljame predicte, que pauper est, quascumque penas quas ipsi judei ratione predicta incurrerunt vel condemnati fuerunt eisdem grosem duxerimus remittendas.”

¹⁵⁹ ACA: C 647: 90v–91r (13 April 1347): “Pro parte aljame judeorum Muriveteris fuit nobis expositum reverenter quod ipsi, occasione diversarum contentionum quas habebant cum aliquibus singularibus aljame ipsius, qui tacita veritate obtinuerunt litteras de non solvendo in subsidiis et aliis exaccionibus ni certas quantitates, licet ultra dictas quantitates solvere deberent eorum facultatibus compensatis, de voluntate et expresso assensu omnium judeorum aljame predicte, exceptis duobus vel tribus, fecerunt ordinationem seu tecanam quod quilibet judeus et judea teneatur solvere in omnibus exaccionibus regalibus et vicinalibus, videlicet quilibet pro hiis que habeat in bonis quod manifestare teneantur per juramentum et alatmam in posse secretariorum ipsius aljame.”

¹⁶⁰ ACA: C 644: 108r (20 April 1347). Here Isaac Avinaçara appealed to the king because the *aljama* was not repaying him the 600 sous he had loaned it. The passing of this ordinance seems to have preceded the one calling for full disclosure of assets.

¹⁶¹ ACA: C 650: 147v (1 March 1348) shows, for instance, that *aljama* officials earlier obtained from the royal court a letter abrogating the tax agreement it had made with Meora Avinaçara in order to lure him back to Morvedre from Xèrica.

King Pere, permitted the wife and adult son of the dying Astruc Cortovi to pay taxes for the next five years in accordance with the tax rate of the previous year; in 1347, despite the passing of Astruc, the king, at the instance of the *aljama*, canceled this concession.¹⁶²

The unusual nearly unanimous support for the legislation of 1347 resulted from more than social conscience and solicitude for the poor. It was also the product of fear, fear that if the well-to-do were not compelled to make fiscal contributions fully commensurate with their means, the community would again experience the sort of vicious informing and infighting that had brought it to the brink of chaos twenty years earlier. The ordinances of 1327 prohibiting the appeals of unhappy taxpayers to the crown had been aimed at preventing such a recurrence, but they had proven insufficient. Thus in February 1346 King Pere had licensed the *aljama* to sentence informers to death.¹⁶³ Even this had not stopped Jacob Ategir, a Jew of perhaps middling wealth, from whispering to the king's men about the questionable financial maneuvers of some ruling families. *Aljama* officials did not sentence Jacob to death, perhaps in part because they recognized that real inequities in their methods of fiscal administration had provoked him to inform. Hence they took steps in 1347 to rectify this problem while jailing Jacob for several years for his crime. After his prison term Jacob moved to the capital for a long while.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² ACA: C 640: 143v–144r (11 June 1346) includes the original concession, dated 3 February 1346, and the king's order to all officials to observe it. The Cortovis complained in February that communal officials elected that year, clearly no friends of theirs, had increased the tax rate over that for which they had been assessed by the *adelantats* David Coffe, Abraham Ballester, and Samuel Abinafia. The Cortovis were not a poor family but the victims of fiscal politics. C 647: 148r–149v (7 May 1347) is King Pere's order annulling the concession.

¹⁶³ ACA: C 879: 105v (7 February 1346). *Aljama* officials would try and sentence the Jew accused of *malshinut* but would then hand over the convicted informer to the local justice for capital punishment. The *aljama* was liable to pay the crown 500 sous j. whenever a Jewish informer was thus executed.

¹⁶⁴ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 23, no. 3188 (26 November 1346): "Supplicatio judeorum ipsius aljame nobis exhibita continebat quod nos cum quodam privilegio nostro concessimus eisdem quod, constituto adelantatis judeorum aljame predictae ville et aliis ad infrascripta eligendis, aliquem judeum fore accusatorem seu malsin possent ipsi absque alicuius pene incursu illum accusatorem seu malsin morti tradere, curie nostre de certa peccunia [sic] quantitate propterea respondendo. Et Jacob Ategir, judeus dicte aljame, prout fertur, sue salutis immemor, non veruit judeos prefate aljame et eius singulares coram diversis officialibus accusare eosdem diversimode calumpniando in ipsorum judeorum non modicum detrimentum atque dampnum. Et quamquam, ut dicitur, vigore dicti privilegii, adenantati aljame memorate et electi ad premissa possent ipsum debite absque alicuius pene incursu a rebes

In abandoning Morvedre, Jacob Ategir followed the path taken by other families who had fared poorly in the community's internal battles. The emigration of such families was balanced by the immigration of others. Some of the substantial immigrant families, like the Abinafias, the Abenfaçans, and the Avinaçarar, came to have a role in *aljama* government. They shared power with long-established elite families, such as the Ballesters and the Aldectoris, and with other old Morvedre families, like the Cortovis, whose rise into the ruling group was more recent.

In the 1340s the preeminent Jewish family in Morvedre, in terms of wealth, numbers, and office-holding was the Coffe family. The wealthiest and most powerful of the Coffes was Jahudà, the son of Benvenist.¹⁶⁵ He had two brothers, David and Maymó, and many other relatives in town.¹⁶⁶ Judging from fragmentary evidence, the Coffes usually had a hand in *aljama* government.¹⁶⁷ Despite their

eximere humanis, verumtamen cupientes judei aljame predicte cum debita maturitate in predictis procedere, nobis humiliter supplicarunt eisdem super pretactis de remedio justicie provideri." King Pere instructed Joan Munyós, a local lawyer and knight familiar with the Jewish community, to confer with *aljama* officials and decide on appropriate measures against Ategir. The 500-sous fine the *aljama* would have had to pay the crown had it sentenced Ategir to death was perhaps a factor in the officials' decision to sentence him to imprisonment. In 1353 Ategir complained about the poverty which had befallen him "propter captionem qua fuit detentus per longum tempus in dicta villa" (C 676: 128r-v [4 September]). By 1358 he had moved to Valencia, where he was still litigating with the *aljama* of Morvedre over matters related to the contribution it had once asked him to make to paying the annuities it owed to Christian creditors in Valencia (C 694: 18v-19r [26 January]). Later, he returned to Morvedre. In November 1370 he disputed the *aljama's* collection of sales-taxes from him for transactions he had made in Valencia and on lands of the Order of Montesa; the *aljama* had only been licensed to reestablish internal *cises* the previous August and he was unaware of it (C 753: 138v-139r for Jacob's complaint; and C 919: 135r-v for the license to the *aljama*).

¹⁶⁵ After the Union plundered his house, which he shared with his brother Maymó, his sister, his daughter and her husband, and a Jewish servant named Jucef, Jahudà received an indemnification of 16,000 sous, a princely sum. AMV: Llibre de Certificacions (30 January 1349) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 422-429, no. 9].

¹⁶⁶ The three brothers disputed with their uncle, Jahudà, son of Abraham, the ownership of certain houses which their father, Benvenist, had bequeathed to them but had temporarily entrusted to their uncle (ACA: C 652: 76r-v [27 April 1348]). Another Coffe resident in Morvedre—one Salamó—was the son of "Master Alazar," physician of the royal household. The king had rewarded Alazar with exemption from all royal taxation in 1339. On 2 May 1346 he granted the exemption to "Salamoni filio dicti fisici nostri" (ACA: C 880: 157r-v).

¹⁶⁷ ACA: C 640: 143v-144r (11 June 1346): David Coffe is *adelantat* in 1345 along with Samuel Abinafia and Abraham Ballester. Arxiu Capítular de la Catedral de Barcelona, Notaria Capítular, Pere Borrell: 97v (17 February 1346): present when the *aljama* borrows money from Guillem Rovira, moneychanger of Barcelona, are

great influence, the Coffes by no means overwhelmed the other elite families. When they had no role in government, *aljama* officials rarely missed the opportunity to tax them heavily.¹⁶⁸ Still, the sheer size of the Coffe clan enabled its members to distribute and conceal assets more effectively than most families. Some could remain in Morvedre while others oversaw family investments and created tax havens elsewhere.¹⁶⁹

Wealth, reliable relatives and friends, and the ability to keep one's liquid capital flowing in many different streams, some outside the range of the indefatigable tax collectors—these were the prerequisites of elite status in the *aljama* of Morvedre on the eve of the Black Death. Salamó Coffe, a new immigrant from Huesca unrelated to Morvedre's Coffe clan, stated as much when expressing to King Pere his concerns about setting up house in Morvedre with his new wife, a local girl and daughter of Isaac Alorqui:¹⁷⁰

... he fears that on account of the poverty by which the Jews of the aforesaid *aljama* are oppressed, he will be unduly vexed and burdened by the collectors of the *peita* and other taxes . . . [and] that because he does not have there blood relatives and friends who might rescue him from vexation of this kind, he will therefore be reduced to the disgrace of poverty.

the *sindic*, Jahudà, son of Abraham Coffe (d.); the *adelantats* Vives Abenfaçan and Samuel Abinafia; and the “administrators” David Coffe, Astruc Coffe, Jucef Cortovi, and Jahudà Adzar. Three other Coffes were also there—Jahudà, the son of Benvenist, Benvenist, and Jahudà, the son of David. ACA: C 644: 121r–122r (9 May 1347): Jahudà Coffe, Sr. (*maiori dierum*), probably the son of Abraham, acts as communal tax assessor along with Jucef Cortovi.

¹⁶⁸ ACA: C 650: 97v–98r (27 January 1348): the complaint of Jahudà Coffe about having been excessively taxed by the *adelantats*. Considering that in November he still had 16,000 sous worth of goods for the Union to steal, the *adelantats* could not have done him too much damage. After the Union's attack, he moved to Vila-real; only the threat of royal punishment brought him back home (C 659: 131r–v [10 February 1350]). See also n. 136 for the case of Salamó Coffe. He returned to Morvedre from Vila-real only on the condition that the local bailiff and an “upright Jew” would determine his fiscal contribution for the next two years.

¹⁶⁹ See the previous note and above at n. 142 for the Coffes in the Vall d'Uixó.

¹⁷⁰ ACA: C 644: 121r–122r (9 May 1347): “ut cum ipse pro eo quia contraxit noviter cum filia Içach Alorqui transtulerit de civitate Osce ad dictam aljamam domicilium suum habitandi causa, et timeat propter paupertatem qua judei aljame predicte opprimuntur per taxatores peytarum et exaccionum . . . plus debito agravari et vexari, eo quia inibi non habet consanguineos et amicos qui eum ab huiusmodi vexatione eriperent, quod propterea deveniret ad paupertatis opprobrium.” He obviously felt that he could not depend on his in-laws in the same way as his blood kin.

"The disgrace of poverty," not just the material hardship that indigence brought, was what elite families feared and worked desperately to avoid as the royal treasury and natural calamities dried up their resources. By warding off such shame they remained above the mass of humble Jews. Their social prestige depended on the humble depending on them. Yet decades of exorbitant taxation had brought some elite families to the point that the payment of high taxes and the donation of alms, the very acts that legitimized their authority in the community, could bring about their poverty and disgrace. Resort to the *per sou e lliura* system had therefore become particularly unnerving, for without kinsmen and friends in office, dishonor seemed inescapable. The immigrant Salamó Coffe observed the penury of the corporate *aljama* and the profound unease of his new neighbors, who had reluctantly, though almost unanimously, agreed to legislation requiring the full disclosure of assets. If somewhat more defenseless than them, his anxieties were theirs.

King Pere's prolonged stay in Morvedre between January and April 1348 afforded him ample opportunity to behold the effects of the reinvigorated *per sou e lliura* plan. At least ten, mostly well-to-do, Jews took advantage of his presence to gripe about how unfairly *aljama* officials were taxing them.¹⁷¹ Some Jews were so exercised by the latest tax assessments that even the king's presence in town did not deter them, seconded by Christian friends, from threatening the tax collectors with violence. The latter were too frightened to act. King Pere's solution was to commission two local Christians familiar with the Jewish community, Bonafonat de Vallebrera and Joan Munyós, to determine each Jewish family's fiscal contribution in consultation with "two suitable Jews."¹⁷²

Vallebrera and Munyós would have found that some Jewish families were really too indigent to pay any taxes at all, relying on their wealthier neighbors to deal with the resultant deficit in the communal treasury.¹⁷³ To provide their marriageable daughters with dowries or for other necessities, such needy families turned to the

¹⁷¹ Among the complainants were Jahudà Coffe; Abraham, Ismael, and Bonjuhà Ballester; Meora Avinaçara; Isaac Alorqui; and Jucef Lobell.

¹⁷² ACA: C 651: 122v–123r (18 or 19 February 1348).

¹⁷³ ACA: C 599: 41r (15 February 1349). Serving as tax collector, Salamó, the son of Jahudà Coffe, found "quod aliquae peccunie quantitates remanserunt sibi ad solvendum per aliquos judeos singulares pauperes aljame judeorum dicti loci de talleis sue taxationibus, quas dictus Salamon de mandato seu ordinatione ipsius

community almonry which affluent Jews had endowed. In addition to the truly miserable, there was also a growing number of the shamefaced poor, elite families whom a combination of misfortune and heavy taxation had laid low.¹⁷⁴

Individuals from these families appealed to communal officials and to the king for tax relief and even for alms so that they might maintain a semblance of the lifestyle to which they had grown accustomed and through which they had confirmed their elite status in the eyes of their fellows. *Aljama* officials were not always disposed to treat such unlucky families with generosity, for the prestige and political success of their own families might be enhanced by the others' demotion.

The Aldoctori family, for example, fell on hard times during the 1340s. The death of the head of the family, Jacob, in 1341, was followed five years later by the untimely passing of his son and principal heir, Jahudà. Jacob was wealthy enough to have endowed the communal almonry with property bearing an annual rent of 100 sous; his death sparked an inheritance dispute between Jahudà and his sister Bonadona.¹⁷⁵ When Jahudà died he left a wife, Fachionis, two daughters, Bonadona and Astruga, and a son Jacobet, or "little Jacob."¹⁷⁶ However much Jacob and Jahudà had left to their children and grandchildren or to community charity, both died with taxes unpaid. The communal tax collector, Bonjuhà Ballester, thus wasted little time before confiscating and auctioning off a vineyard

aljame fecit, quasquidem peccunie quantitates taxatas ad solvendum dicti singulares judei solvere nequiverunt propter eorum inopiam et paupertatem." Here Salamó complains that the *administratores* of the *aljama* compelled him to pay the taxes of these paupers and then refused to reimburse him.

¹⁷⁴ For parallels elsewhere, see, for instance, R. Trexler, "Charity and the Defense of Urban Elites in the Italian Communes," in R. Trexler, *Dependence in Context in Renaissance Florence* (Binghamton, NY, 1994), 61–111.

¹⁷⁵ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1606 (16 November 1341). Bonadona and her second husband, Isaac Maymó, sought royal protection against Jahudà, the main heir, who, they alleged, threatened to "consume" whatever Jacob had bequeathed to her and her son from her first marriage, Salamó Senton ("cum dictus Jacob Aldoctori legaverit in suo ultimo testamento dictis supplicantibus aliquas peccunie quantitates timeantque ne bona dicti Jacob Aldoctori per heredem seu detentores consumantur vel etiam destruantur").

¹⁷⁶ Despite the previous inheritance dispute, Isaac Maymó, Jahudà's brother-in-law, was appointed guardian of Jacobet. Still, Jacobet and his mother did not completely trust Isaac and demanded that he render for official inspection the accounts of his administration of Jacobet's inheritance. ACA: C 651: 62r–v (7 December 1347); and C 649: 149v (22 December).

Jahudà had bequeathed to his son.¹⁷⁷ More damaging to the Aldectoris' status in the community was the sale of grandfather Jacob's seat in the synagogue.¹⁷⁸ The Aldectoris' decline was more than symbolic. In 1348 the now nubile daughters of the late Jahudà had to beg for a share of the endowment their grandfather had made to the almonry; without it "they could not be married."¹⁷⁹

The Aldectori girls were not alone in attempting to retrieve the alms left to the *aljama* by relatives who had seen better days. Even a member of the Coffe clan, one Salamó, resorted to petitioning for the recovery of the pious legacies of his brothers, David and Benvenist. Skeptical of Salamó's alleged penury, the administrator of the endowment refused to cooperate.¹⁸⁰ When requesting a tax break, Isaac Alorqui portrayed himself as on the verge of begging for alms; heavy taxation and the marriages of his several children had brought him to such an extremity.¹⁸¹ Of course, deploying and hiding behind labels of "rich" and "poor" had long been part of fiscal politics and

¹⁷⁷ ACA: C 640: 103r (18 May 1346): "Pro parte Fachionis, uxoris Jaffudani Altochtori quondam de dicta villa, fuit nobis humiliter demonstratum quod Bonjuha Balistarius, judeus dicte ville, emptor sive collector aliquarum talliarum judeorum dicte aljame, fecit venditionem cuiusdam trocii vinee, asserens illud fore Jacobeti Altochtori pretextu cuiusdam quantitatis per dictum Jacobetum, ut dicitur, debite in dictis tallis. Et quamquam dicta judea pluries requisiverit judeum prelibatum quod sibi dictum troceum vinee restituat, verumtamen idem judeus, ut dicitur, hoc maliciose facere contraxerit in ipsius judee evidens dampnum ac etiam preiudicium."

¹⁷⁸ ACA: C 640: 145r (2 June 1346): "Conquestum est nobis graviter Jacob Maymo quod licet ipse emerit a collectore peytarum et aliarum exaccionum regali-um aljame judeorum dicte ville quoddam sitium in sinagoga dicte judarie situat-um, quod dictus collector vendi fecit pro aliquibus peccunie quantitibus quibus Jacob Aldectori, cuius tunc erat dictum sitium, in peyta et aliis exaccionibus solvere tenebatur. . . ." It is interesting that the buyer was Jacob Maymó, relative of Isaac Maymó, the son-in-law of Jacob Aldectori and brother-in-law of Jahudà. If the suspicions of Jacobet and his mother were justified (see n. 176), the Maymós were probably taking advantage of the misfortunes of their in-laws. Jacob Maymó's plans, however, were at least temporarily foiled, for Jahudà Coffe, apparently in his capacity as the *aljama*'s fiscal administrator, resold the seat in Maymó's absence. Coffe perhaps had political reasons for wanting to deny Maymó this seat.

¹⁷⁹ ACA: C 650: 99v (4 January 1348): "Bonadona et Astrucha, judee filie Jofodani Aldectori, judei quondam dicte ville, sua nobis petitione humiliter demonstrarunt quod Jacob Aldectori, earum avus, dimisit centum solidos regalium censuales parum plus vel minus pauperibus elemosinarie erogandos, et quia dicte judee sunt pau-peres et non habent unde valeant maritari nec sibi in necessariis provideri, nobis humiliter supplicarunt ut daremus eis licenciam et auctoritatem quod possint vendere vel vendi facere quinquaginta solidos censuales de predictis."

¹⁸⁰ ACA: C 649: 188v (29 January 1348).

¹⁸¹ ACA: C 650: 181v (23 March 1348).

status competition in the Jewish community, but the phenomenon of elite families suing to recover the pious legacies of deceased relatives, of being practically reduced to begging—this was something new.

Fractionous and at times dispersed between town and rural villages, the Jews of the *aljama* of Morvedre were nonetheless very much a community on the eve of the Black Death. The many complaints and pleas lodged with the royal authorities, which naturally thrust internecine conflict and the apparent fragility of the community into relief, afford glimpses of attitudes and behaviors which lent the community a fundamental resilience. The fiscal calculations and political maneuverings of elite and would-be elite Jews involved balancing personal and family ambition with the needs of the community. Indeed, Jews could not achieve the former without giving due attention to the latter. Honor and prestige were contingent on the approval of other Jews of the Morvedre community; without a community, social status, and the material wealth on which it was partially based, had no meaning. Thus the Jews who endeavored not to render too much to the royal treasury still paid a great deal in taxes and charity in order to uphold their status; the Jews who exploited their term in office to lash out at their enemies also administered the affairs of the community as best they could, not infrequently assuming the responsibility for the *aljama's* debts themselves; the Jews who moved to seignorial villages to evade taxation usually returned to avoid communal bans and to protect their position; and the Jews who eagerly bought the synagogue seats of insolvent or deceased fellows did so in order to display their status before other families in the community, their opinions the only ones that really mattered. The petty squabbling and social struggles between Jews which the king was occasionally asked to referee were over prizes which ultimately only the community could reward.

For the Jews the community was the measure of all things. They were not free agents. Living in an essentially hostile world, Jews did not have the luxury of imagining themselves as anything but members of a Jewish community. Nor would the monarchs let them. For purposes of taxation Jews were organized into *aljamas*; they had to be members of one. No matter how much they might dispute precisely how the fiscal burden was to be apportioned within the community, there was no question that they would pull together as a

community to meet the king's demands, or most of them. The heavy fiscal burden the Jews perforce bore did not allow for an especially tranquil community life, but they bore it just the same in order to enjoy the privilege and the intangible benefits of persisting as a Jewish community.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE YOKE OF USURY

The implications of the monarchy's heavy taxation of the Jews of Morvedre were not limited to *aljama* finances, *aljama* politics, and cooperation with other *aljamas*. Royal fiscal policy also had a palpable impact on the Jews' relations with Christians in the region because the imperative to tax the Jews guided royal treatment of the sensitive issue of Jewish moneylending to Christians. To put it most simply, the kings acknowledged the necessity of credit for the economy of the kingdom—an economy which they taxed in multiform ways—and that the Jews, with their financial resources and prior experience as lenders in Catalonia and Aragon, were best situated to provide it. The conquered Muslims, many of whose elites had emigrated, were not in a position, financially or politically, to furnish Christians with capital. Canon and royal law of course prohibited Christians from making usurious loans to their fellows, and although this did not stop Christian lenders, the kings expected that needy Christians would frequently turn to Jewish lenders and indeed encouraged them to do so.¹ If these same Jews were going to pay the often exorbitant taxes required by the crown, then monarchs and their officials had to ensure that Christian borrowers repaid the Jews—with interest, which amounted ultimately to an indirect royal levy on the borrowers.² Here was the crux of the problem and the source of tension. Considering the linkage between royal taxation of the Jews, Jewish moneylending, and the collection of debts from Christians, along with the fact that Christians too were subject to royal levies of increasing size and variety, it is not surprising that Christian complaints about Jewish lenders in Morvedre, and elsewhere in the kingdom, were voiced mostly in the years of growing fiscal pressure, and especially during the reigns of Pere II and Jaume II.

¹ Recall the law forbidding knights to make usurious loans or sales on credit with interest to other Christians (*Furs*, 4: 106, Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. XI); and see Torrò, *Naixement d'una colònia*, 180–181.

² A point argued by Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 1, 26–27, 30–31, 47, 60–63.

Valencia's kings never challenged the ability of Jews to lend money at interest to Christians; instead, they limited the amount of interest that Jewish lenders could collect to twenty percent of the principal. In the earliest years of the new kingdom's existence, even before Jews settled in Morvedre, Jaume I established this fundamental limitation as well as other guidelines for Jewish loans to Christians: compounding interest was forbidden; Jewish lenders had to swear to local officials that they would not charge any more than the rate of interest set by the crown; before redacting debt instruments notaries had to verify that the lender had taken such an oath, and, through careful questioning of both lender and borrower, to ensure that a fraudulent or illicit loan was not being contracted; and the loan contracts had to be made in the presence of two witnesses.³

These safeguards, however, did not necessarily prevent some Jewish lenders of Morvedre from charging illegally high rates of interest or Christian borrowers needing capital or commodities, like wheat and livestock, from accepting less advantageous terms. In 1271 King Jaume stayed all lawsuits that had been initiated against Jews of Morvedre for this reason. Still, the degree to which such complaints were, according to the law, justifiable, is impossible to determine.⁴ Given the influence and popularity of the Dominican Order, whose leading lights, like Ramon de Penyafort, deemed usury a sin by its very nature, perhaps some Christian plaintiffs felt aggrieved not just by paying high interest rates but by paying any interest at all.⁵

Tensions surrounding the issue of Jewish moneylending heightened during the reign of Pere II, because Christians perceived a connection

³ *Furs*, 4: 94–95, Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. I; *Aureum opus*, 3r–4r (25 February 1241), and 4v–5v (11 November 1241), which forbids all judges and officials to compel a Christian to pay usury to another Christian.

⁴ ACA: C 16: 239v (25 October 1271). The king's letter appears less a response to a widespread problem than a gentle reminder to the Jews that if they followed royal guidelines—"if you act thus (*si ita facitis*)"—their lending activities could continue unhampered. Y. Assis, *The Jews of Santa Coloma de Queralt: An Economic and Demographic Case Study of a Community at the End of the Thirteenth Century* (Jerusalem, 1988), 78, finds that in fourteen percent of the loans made by the Jews of Santa Coloma between 1293 and 1299 interest rates higher than the legal twenty percent were charged, and expresses "astonishment that the rule established by the kings of Aragon was so blatantly ignored."

⁵ J. Shatzmiller, *Shylock Reconsidered: Jews, Moneylending, and Medieval Society* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990), 45–47; K. Stow, "Papal and Royal Attitudes Toward Jewish Lending in the Thirteenth Century," *Association for Jewish Studies Review*, 6 (1981), 166–169; and the works cited by both authors.

between moneylending and the problem of Jewish power in the kingdom, and because Pere's fiscal exactions were making life more difficult for everyone, especially the Jews. As his father had done, in 1280 Pere absolved the Jewish lenders of Morvedre, along with those from all the Jewish communities in the Crown of Aragon, of all penalties they might have incurred for charging illegally high interest rates. But in this case Pere demanded a huge payment from the crown's Jews in return for the pardon, and thereby initiated a new means of taxing the Jews, particularly the profits from their moneylending.⁶ More important, in regard to Christian concerns about Jewish usury, was the fact that before issuing the pardon the king had commanded an investigation to be made into the Jews' illicit practices.⁷ Such an investigation, whether merely announced or actually conducted, planted in Christian minds the presumption of Jewish guilt. Furthermore, the Jews' compensation payment to the king, which ceased all legal procedure against them, would have appeared to Christians little more than a bribe and an acknowledgement of guilt. The deleterious effect of the payment on the finances of the *aljama* and of individual Jews would not have been of any consequence to Christians. Christian borrowers with legitimate grievances against Jewish lenders would have been left especially frustrated.

On the other hand, the blanket pardon and the massive compensation payment may have incited some Jewish lenders, now under greater fiscal pressure, to continue or to begin to charge unlawful interest rates. King Pere had, after all, sanctioned their moneylending and had stipulated that, if caught charging illegal interest, they would be penalized only with restitution to Christian debtors of the interest they had received in excess of the twenty percent.⁸ Such a penalty was but a slap on the wrist—until the next royal investigation, when, guilty or not, they would be forced to contribute to the general fine. The royal policy of first investigating and then dropping all charges against Jews for illicit usury, and finally, in effect,

⁶ ACA: C 44: 183v–184r (24 June 1280) for the general absolution; and C 48: 116r (12 August 1280) for the order that all tax-exempt Jews of Calatayud, Aragon, and of the kingdom of Valencia contribute to the compensation payment. See also Shatzmiller, *Shylock Reconsidered*, 56–58.

⁷ ACA: C 44: 183v–184r: “pro usuris . . . in aliquo contra dictum cotum [rate of interest set by Jaime I] . . . super quibus contra vos inquisitionem fieri mandaveramus.”

⁸ ACA: C 44: 183v–184r.

taxing that usury benefited the royal treasury and perhaps some Jewish lenders, damaged *aljama* finances, and injected a greater degree of suspicion and resentment into the volatile chemistry of Jewish-Christian relations.

The *Privilegium Magnum*, which King Pere perforce conceded to the towns of his kingdom in December 1283, significantly included measures regarding Jewish usury along with the much discussed promise not to appoint Jewish bailiffs or tax collectors. Christians perceived a linkage between Jews exercising public authority and Jews lending money to Christians. First of all, both left Christians in an inferior position to Jews: the former implied Christian obedience and subservience to Jews, and the latter Christian obligation to Jews.⁹ Secondly, the authority of Jewish bailiffs seemed to afford Jewish usurers greater royal protection and favor and to facilitate their exaction of interest, even unduly high interest, from Christian debtors. However, if Christians felt, and made the king recognize, that the monarchy must do without Jewish bailiffs, neither they nor the king were quite prepared to live without Jewish credit. The townspeople nonetheless insisted that Jewish lending be subject to more stringent regulations, and the resultant laws expressed the ill will Christians harbored against the Jews for providing a service so many of them needed.

Indeed, a note of distrust of Jewish usurers pervades the regulations, which seem designed as much to furnish Christian debtors with loopholes through which they might escape Jewish creditors as to curb specifically the chicanery of unscrupulous usurers. One clause of the *Privilegium Magnum* provided that should any Christian encounter an article of property stolen from him or her "in the possession of some Jew or of some other person" (although clearly Jews were at issue here), the "stolen" property had to be returned to the Christian owner "freely without price and service." This ruling had disastrous implications for Jews who had lent money on the pledge of the personal property of Christian borrowers. The borrowers could simply accuse the Jewish creditors of having "stolen" the pawn, in the hope of recovering it and escaping their debts. Since pawnbroking would not have necessitated recourse to a notary, the pawn itself providing

⁹ See also W.C. Jordan, "Jews on Top: Women and the Availability of Consumption Loans in Northern France in the Mid-Thirteenth Century," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 29 (1978), 47.

sufficient security, the creditors would lack decisive written evidence to counter such accusations.¹⁰

The king and townspeople desired, however, that virtually all loans and all debt payments be recorded by a notary, “on account of the deceit and many frauds which Jews, as is said, commit against Christians by reason of a certain privilege they have that they should be repaid that which they assert they have loaned.” The suggestion here was that Jews had been demanding the collection of sums they had never loaned, or collecting legitimate debts twice, and that officials (and no doubt the Jewish bailiffs) had been too compliant in pursuing the claims of Jewish creditors. Henceforth Jews were not to be repaid any more than five sous without a notarized instrument (*carta*) recording the act or without Christians witnessing it.¹¹

Furthermore, as a means of inhibiting Jewish usurers from charging more than the rate of interest set by Jaume I, they were to swear each year to the local justice that they would not do so. The penalty for excessive usury was now stiffer than it had been in 1280: instead of merely restoring the ill-gained sums to the borrower, the usurer would lose the principal and pay an additional fine of ten silver marks. The crown would receive a third of the fine, the municipality, for which the justice worked, a third, and the accuser a third.¹² This measure more effectively deterred Jewish lenders from malfeasance but it also increased the potential for unfounded allegations against Jews, since Christian debtors and conniving local justices both stood to profit from them.

Although it would seem that the cards were now sufficiently stacked against Jewish moneylenders, the Valencian towns, as has been seen, also persuaded King Pere to decree that in any civil case between Christian and Jew two “good and honest” Christian witnesses would do; Jewish witnesses were no longer required. Probably influenced as well by the mendicants, Pere justified this legal change with the libellous assertion that rabbis excommunicated Jews who testified against their coreligionists, and that Jews, in accordance with Jewish law, were accustomed to swear on Passover that any oaths they might make in agreements with Christians during the coming year

¹⁰ *Aureum opus*, 32v; on pawnbroking, see Shatzmiller, *Shylock Reconsidered*, 76–77.

¹¹ *Furs*, 4: 96, Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. III; and *Aureum opus*, 32v.

¹² *Furs*, 4: 96, Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. II; and *Aureum opus*, 32v.

would be null and void.¹³ The note of Christian suspicion of Jewish deceit was resounding. Christian borrowers exposed to such notions would have been led to expect the worst from their Jewish creditors. The new regulations of 1283 at least gave them the ability to defend themselves against, or to turn the tables on, the Jews.

Christians in Morvedre lost little time in taking advantage of this modification of judicial procedure to evade the obligations they had previously contracted with Jews. The king had to remind the justice of Morvedre, who was all too willing to rely on the testimony of Christian witnesses alone, that the new procedures did not apply to litigation over contracts affirmed before December 1283. In lawsuits regarding these contracts the testimony of at least one Jew was still required.¹⁴ The justice had indeed taken all the suspicions about local Jewish moneylenders to heart. He was thus also prohibiting the acceptance of *instrumenta* recording the sale of livestock on credit by Jews to Christians out of concern that some form of illicit usury might be involved. The king commanded the justice to desist from his interventions.¹⁵ Although the new regulations, and the distrust and resentment that had prompted them, could possibly have disrupted local networks of credit in which Jews were key figures, on the whole cooler heads, mutual economic interest, and royal authority prevailed.

King Pere brought the weight of his authority to bear on another type of credit relationship linking Christians to Jews: the corporate debts of *aljamas* to Christian lenders. Fiscal pressure from the crown had impelled the Valencian *aljamas* to contract these debts. In 1285 Pere's dire need for revenue to finance the defense of his realms against a French invasion forced him to stay all legal procedures against the *aljamas* initiated by their Christian creditors so that he

¹³ *Aureum opus*, 33v–34r; see also chap. 2. Baer, *History*, 1: 173, translates the justification for change in judicial procedure and plausibly suggests mendicant influence.

¹⁴ ACA: C 46: 208v (13 June 1284): "Justicie Muriveteris vel eius locumtenenti. Salutem et gratiam. Mandamus vobis quatenus super contractibus factis inter cristianos et judeos ante concessionem privilegiorum nostrorum factam civitati et omnibus locis Regni observetis judeis Muriveteris sicut primitus ante dictam concessionem observabatis iudeis quod non posset probari contra [eos] nisi per cristianum et judeum, cum concessionem per nos facta seu statuta non intelligantur ad contractus presentes set futuros. In contractibus vero post concessionem nostras facta faciatis juxta concessionem et privilegia nostra, que quidem concessionem et privilegia per vos et alios volumus inviolabiliter observari."

¹⁵ ACA: C 46: 208v (13 June 1284) includes both letters addressed to the justice of Morvedre.

could secure all *aljama* resources for the royal treasury.¹⁶ The Christian creditors and the municipal officials attempting to pursue their claims would have noticed the discrepancy between the king's treatment of the Jews' Christian creditors and his handling of Jewish creditors, who were still allowed to proceed, if somewhat more carefully, against Christians indebted to them. Sympathy for their harried king or for Jewish *aljamas* struggling to pay the king's taxes was not likely to have figured prominently in their estimation of the situation. The creditors in fact refused to postpone their claims against the insolvent *aljamas*; some of them must have needed the money to pay their share of the taxes the king had levied on their towns. In 1287 Alfons II had to reprimand local justices and *jurats* for acting on their claims and disobeying his father's earlier orders.¹⁷ In Morvedre at least the municipality felt the squeeze of the crown as much as the *aljama*, and both were chasing diminishing resources. That same year King Alfons excused the municipality from paying 8,000 of the 15,000 sous in taxes for which it was originally liable.¹⁸ A royal fiscal policy that presupposed a continual flow of revenue to and from the Jews, regardless of the necessities of the Jews' debtors and creditors and of the Jews themselves, tended to make a lot of people in the kingdom unhappy.

The tactics of Jaume II were not calculated to brighten their mood. Like his father, Jaume dealt with the question of Jewish usury in the manner that most benefited the royal treasury, often heedless of the fulminations of leading ecclesiastics. Yet despite the seeming imbalance, from the Christians' perspective, in the king's handling of credit issues, and the heavy and irritating fiscal burdens that the king

¹⁶ ACA: C 57: 180r-v (6 August 1285). The king's order, however, did not prohibit Christian creditors from filing suit against individual Jews. For example, ACA: C 66: 79v (13 May 1286), regarding the procedure of the justice of Morvedre against Jucef and Salamó Avinçaprut at the instance of Ferran Garces, citizen of Valencia. According to Garces, the Avinçaprut brothers had borrowed 2,700 sous from him. The king—Alfons in this case—ordered the justice to cease “compelling the said Jews to pay,” not because of his father's ordinance but because the Avinçapruits maintained that they had never received the money from Garces.

¹⁷ ACA: C 74: 2r (7 October 1287).

¹⁸ ACA: C 68: 58v (25 October 1287). This is not to say that the Christians of Morvedre were taxed proportionately as much as the Jews; clearly they were not. The 5,000 sous exacted from the Jews in 1287 (see chap. 3, Table 2) amounted to a third of the 15,000 sous the Christian population was required to pay, but the Jewish population in Morvedre was far less than a third of the size of the Christian population.

imposed on Christians and Jews alike, instances of widespread and sustained Christian resistance to Jewish creditors were actually few and far between during Jaume's long reign. These flare-ups, caused first, in 1305, by an episcopal campaign against Jewish usury, and later, in the 1320s, by King Jaume's outrageous taxation, occurred against the background of a prevalent equilibrium. They illuminate the range of formal and informal practices which had jelled, by the reign of Jaume II, to form a system facilitating Christian (and Muslim) access to Jewish credit as well as the Jews' collection of debts with interest. Neither the aggressive tactics of the bishop of Valencia nor the more evasive ones adopted by Christian debtors can be properly understood without a sense of how this system functioned.

In accordance with the *Furs*, all loan contracts had to be recorded by a notary; this protected both creditor and debtor. In an alternative arrangement, the debtor could swear before the local justice to repay the creditor at a specific time. The scribe of the justice's court would record the debtor's oath in the court register (*Llibre de la Cort*), the contents of which had the same probative, juridical value as contracts redacted and recorded by a public notary.¹⁹

The Jewish lenders of Morvedre used both arrangements. Some kept copies of notarized debt instruments in their own safe-chests,²⁰ or simply relied on the record of the notary's register.²¹ Others transacted their loans in the courts of municipal justices, in Morvedre and in other towns. The Jews, then, did not always travel to the vil-

¹⁹ Magdalena, "Cort del Justicia," 29–30, 39–55.

²⁰ Thus the criminal Pero de Çapata knew where to look when he robbed the home of the Jewish lender Mossé Avenrodich. ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 108, no. 13,481 (n.d.) describes the scene: "Item lo dit Pero Çapata entra de nit en les cases de Mosse Avenrodich en la juheria de Murvedre. Lo dit Mosse era anat a Almanara aquel vespre . . . E lo dit Mosse portasen la clau hon eren tots sos diners e ses cartes e ses joyes. E lo dit Pero Çapata trenca les portes del palau et effondra e trenca totes les caxes que aqui eren e talla totes les cartes quey troba e portasen tots los diners e anabs d'argent que tenia en penyora e caçes e joyes e moltes robes que valien ben V milia sous e plus . . . E aço senyor es certa cosa e provado e fama per tota Murvedre; e avia I anab d'en Alfonso Martinez que tenia lo dit jueu en penyora." Çapata was accused of having committed a long list of crimes, including murder and rape, against people of all three faiths. See also the comments of Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 32, on Çapata's career.

²¹ A good later example is ACA: C 1616: 6v–7r (29 November 1367), which addresses the plea of the heirs of Mossé Asseyo, who, in the wake of the destructive Castilian war, could not recover his *instrumenta* "nec ea a notariis qui ipsa receperunt seu testificati fuerunt aut prothocola seu registra aliorum notariorum seu alio quovis justo casu detinent."

lages of their clients; sometimes clients came to them in the nearest town. Resort to the justices of towns like Onda and Sogorb enabled the lenders to service the inhabitants of outlying villages without necessarily visiting all of them.²² This system facilitated the impressive geographic range of their credit operations.²³

Jewish lenders used various methods to secure their loans. A privilege of Jaume I, later confirmed by Jaume II, permitted Jewish pawnbroking in the kingdom of Valencia. Jews usually received pawns for smaller loans. In such cases the parties did not require the services of a notary.²⁴ Christian borrowers hoping to recover their pawns on the basis of charges that their creditors had stolen them needed to produce at least one Jewish witness in support of their claim.²⁵

When notaries intervened—that is, in cases of all but the smallest loans and when the justice's court was not utilized—borrowers were sometimes required to produce guarantors, who were obliged to requite the lender if the borrower could not. Hence when the king granted moratoria to insolvent debtors, the moratoria covered their guarantors as well.²⁶

²² ACA: C 173: 51r-v (2 May 1321) is an example of the role of the justice of Sogorb regarding loans made in the village of Altura. C 373: 203v (7 May 1325) is addressed to the justice of Onda: "quod ipse [Mossé Asseyo] mutuavit aliquibus sarracenis de Toga, rivi Millars, aliquas pecunie quantitates, quas dicti sarraceni promiserunt ei exsolvere sub pena quarti, prout in libro curie vestre dicti justicie continetur."

²³ See chap. 1 for the spheres of operations of the Jewish lenders of Morvedre and other Valencian towns.

²⁴ Assis, *Jews of Santa Coloma*, 87–90; Emery, *Jews of Perpignan*, 32–33. Magdalena, "Cort del Justicia," 49, points out that municipal justices did not proceed in cases of debts of less than 5 sous, a factor which would have encouraged Jews to accept pawns to secure such very small loans. There is not a great deal of evidence on the Jews of Morvedre pawnbroking. The *cisa* legislation of 1327, however, indicates that pawnbroking was a regular practice (see below). Some specific examples are the case of Mossé Avenrodrih in n. 20, and that of Mossé Asseyo and others in n. 25.

²⁵ Jaume II confirmed the privilege on 12 January 1292. In doing so, he apparently overrode the provision in the *Privilegium Magnum* which was potentially so prejudicial to Jewish lenders (see above at nn. 10–13). ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 67, no. 8288 (14 October 1325) is the response of Prince Alfons to the complaints of Mossé Asseyo of Morvedre and other Jewish lenders that the privilege, which protected them against spurious charges of theft, was being violated.

²⁶ Again, the evidence on the Jews of Morvedre is limited, but see the *elongamenta* granted in ACA: C 59: 131r (18 October 1282) to the butcher Martí and his *fideiussores* for debts to three Jews; in C 139: 111r (29 December 1306) to Matheu Adalill and his *fideiussores* for a debt of 80 sous to Samuel Passarell; and in C 139: 286v (25 May 1307) to Gonçalo de Vera and his *fideiussores* for a debt of 400 sous to Jucef Algehen (or Aljami).

Jews whose loans were recorded in the registers of municipal justices could count on the fairly efficient protection of their investments. If borrowers did not repay them within the time period to which they had sworn, creditors simply had to file a claim with the justice, who would then, after checking his records, proceed against the debtors and their property, confiscating and auctioning off however much was necessary to indemnify them. The *pena del quart*, a fine equivalent to a quarter of the debt that the justice exacted from such debtors, gave the justice further incentive to act on behalf of the creditors.²⁷

The legal system coped well enough with the suits Christians occasionally filed against Jewish lenders. They remained discrete cases and did not become part of a general Christian outcry against Jewish usury. In 1294 Juçef Bonet was accused of having forged, or of having suborned a notary to forge, a debt instrument so that he could collect money from Oger de Cervet.²⁸ Three years later, after admittedly borrowing money from local Jews at an illegally high rate of interest, G. de Belloc of Morvedre asked the king to stop his creditors from "extorting" the "usury *ultra cotum*."²⁹ In both cases the

²⁷ *Furs*, 2: 11–12, Llibre I. Rúbrica IIII. I, on the *pena del quart*. ARV: J Civil 60: n.f. (3 October 1337) is a letter of the justice of Morvedre to his counterpart in Valencia regarding a "reeclam" which Salamó Coffé, Jew of Morvedre and cessionaire of Astruga, the widow of Benvenist Coffé, is making against the debtor Bernat Matheu, once resident of Montcada in the *ort* of Valencia and now resident of the city itself. In asking the justice of Valencia to proceed against Matheu for the 240-sous debt, the justice of Morvedre points out, regarding the substance of Coffé's claim, "que totes les dites coses en los libros de la nostra Cort mills e pus largament son contengudes." Magdalena, "*Cort del Justicia*," 45–55, gives a detailed account of such procedures. He notes, however, that in fifteenth-century Castelló the full one-quarter fine was rarely exacted (50), no doubt because the penalty could not be collected until the creditor was first requited. The justices were probably reluctant to burden struggling families excessively. It should be pointed out that the justice's court handled the claims of all creditors—Christian, Muslim, or Jewish—and functioned in the same way regardless of the faith of the creditors and debtors.

²⁸ ACA: C 89: 47v (11 December 1294): "Justicie Muriveteris. Licet mandavissimus vobis per litteras nostras quod mitteretis ad nos Juçephum Boneti, judeum Muriveteris, ratione falsitatis que comissit, ut dicitur, super confectione cuiusdam instrumenti per quod petebat ab Ogerio de Cerveto quoddam debitum, dicimus et mandamus vobis quatenus contra dictum judeum procedatis ratione falsitatis predictæ quantum de jure et foro Valencie fuerit faciendum."

²⁹ ACA: C 107: 176r (30 December 1297): "Ex parte G. de Pulcro Loco, vicini Muriveteris, fuit coram nobis expositum conquerendo quod aliqui judei a quibus recipit mutua ad usuras extorsorivas [sic] extorquere intendunt ab eo usuras ratione dictorum debitum [sic] ultra cotum in maxima quantitate."

local justice followed established legal procedures; neither case occasioned any excitement. Even when the local Franciscan house filed suit on behalf of Brother Gil de Malonda against the Jew Isaac Passarell, because the latter had acquired, by virtue of a loan, some goods of Malonda's recently deceased mother which Malonda hoped to inherit, the Franciscans' agent did not make an issue of Jewish usury as such.³⁰

Dilatory Christian debtors raised few complaints about justices impounding and selling their property on behalf of Jewish creditors in particular. The Christian and Muslim farmers of Nules protested because their lord's creditors had confiscated their plow animals, but they did not specify the religious identity of the creditors.³¹ When Guillem Romei of Almenara griped about the sale of a piece of his land on account of his outstanding debt to "a certain Jew," he made an issue of the unfairly low price which the land fetched, not of the 'rapacity' of the Jewish usurer.³² In such circumstances complainants tended to focus on the alleged malfeasance of the justice and his sidekick the *quartoner*, who was responsible for collecting the *pena del quart* and, if necessary, confiscating goods toward its payment.³³

The details of a lawsuit pitting Jucef Algehen, a moneylender from Morvedre, against the noble Ramon de Montcada, the lord of Nules, indicate just how effectively the kingdom's legal system normally functioned to safeguard Jewish loans. With the king as its ultimate sanction, even a member of a powerful aristocratic family could be brought to heel. Sometime before the winter of 1308 two agents of

³⁰ ACA: C 104: 75r (5 September 1296).

³¹ ACA: C 131: 21v (11 January 1304). In 1308 Jucef Algehen of Morvedre would be one of the creditors of the lord, Ramon de Montcada (C 142: 56r). There can be no doubt that Christians were lending money as well; indeed, Bishop Ramon Despont (discussed below) agitated against Christian usurers before moving against the Jews. Some examples from Morvedre are ACA: C 143: 28v (18 December 1308), regarding the debt of Johan de Vall Fegona to Bernat de Sant Clement; and C 144: 172v (29 March 1310), regarding the complaint of Barthomeu Menescall that the local justice confiscated from him and sold *pignora* because of his debts to Domènec Ferrer.

³² ACA: C 145: 245v (10 January 1311). Considering the prominence of Morvedre's lenders in Almenara, the Jew was probably from Morvedre. Romei claimed that the land was worth 140 sous, instead of the 60 sous it fetched.

³³ In 1325 the *jurats* of Morvedre accused the local *quartoner* of running a racket in which his accomplices bought the auctioned property of debtors at artificially low prices so that he could later profit from its resale at market value (ACA: C 186: 253v). Later, in 1353, the *quartoner* Johan Beneyto would be the subject of complaints (C 676: 160r–161r).

Montcada resident in Morvedre, Bernat d'Almenara and Ramon de Cornell, borrowed on their lord's behalf 900 sous, or perhaps more, from Jucef and swore before the justice of Sogorb to repay him at a certain time. When the time elapsed and Jucef claimed his due, the agents countered that the two-year moratorium on debt payment just granted to their lord freed them, for a while at least, from their obligation to Jucef. Even though the justice of Sogorb ruled in his favor, Jucef relented and reached an agreement with the agents whereby he would accept a partial payment of the principal—with interest—and forego the rest until the moratorium expired. Almenara and Cornell, however, would not honor even this agreement and refused to pay the interest. When the justice of Morvedre ordered them to appear with Jucef before the royal chancery court, they did not show up. But Ramon de Montcada did, alleging that since *he* had not been present when his agents made the accord with Jucef, it did not bind him. By then King Jaume had seen enough of Montcada's maneuvers. Acknowledging Jucef's munificence in having consented to observe the moratorium, he insisted that he not be inconvenienced further.³⁴

In contrast to the unusual legal complications to which this loan of Jucef Algehen gave rise, most Jewish loans to seigneurs must have ended in timely repayment or more straightforward renegotiation of the payment schedule.³⁵ The extension of favorable terms to noble and knightly borrowers earned the Jews of Morvedre some of the patronage and protection which would later prove so important at critical moments, like the Union rebellion or the 1391 riots.³⁶ In quieter times lords expressed their appreciation to forgiving Jewish creditors, or simply repaid them, by permitting them to farm the rents on their estates.

³⁴ ACA: C 141: 246v–247r ([damaged] probably March 1308) is Jucef's initial complaint. C 142: 56r (6 June 1308) concerns the agreement, sponsored by the *procurator* of the realm; 73v (19 June) the refusal of the agents to pay the interest; and 127r–v (6 August) King Jaume's final order after Montcada's intervention. Montcada was heavily indebted to several creditors, for the *elongamentum* covered debts up to the sum of 5,000 sous (C 142: 17v [17 January 1308]). See at n. 31 for the implications of Montcada's debts for the peasants of Nules. On the earlier history of the Montcada family, see J. Shideler, *A Medieval Catalan Noble Family: The Montcadas 1000–1230* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983).

³⁵ Assis, *Jews of Santa Coloma*, 50–55, for loans to regional knights and nobles.

³⁶ See chap. 5; and Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 1.

Most importantly, without the cooperation of the seigneurs and their officials, Morvedre's Jewish lenders could not have made loans to or collected debts from their Christian and Muslim tenants. These peasants constituted the bulk of the Jews' clientele.³⁷ The seigneurs knew better than anyone the extent to which the success of their tenants' agricultural endeavors, and hence the size of their own lordly incomes, depended on their receiving credit from the Jews on favorable terms. As both were relatively affluent and, in their respective social worlds, wielders of power, Christian seigneurs and Jewish lenders understood each other. After all, it was the seigneurs who permitted well-to-do Jews evading royal taxation to reside on their estates.³⁸ The Jews' extended stays in seigneurial villages deepened their familiarity with the lords, their officials, and the Christian and Muslim farmers to whom they provided credit.

In 1298 King Jaume took the first of several measures relative to Jewish moneylending that heightened the discontent of some Christians and attracted the attention of a bishop who became, for a time, their voice. That year the king called for and then called off an inquiry into Jews lending money at excessively high interest rates, and received a 20,000-sous *compositio* from the Valencian *aljamas*.³⁹ This of course led Christians to draw invidious conclusions about Jewish moneylenders and their intentions. At the same time, in order to facilitate the Jews' payment of the settlement and other taxes, King Jaume licensed a member of his household, Bernat de Solsona, to act, at the *aljamas'* request, as special agent for recovering debts owed to Jews.⁴⁰ Furthermore, lest the resources of his Jewish taxpayers be depleted, he directed officials to confiscate from the Jews' Christian creditors any usury they had collected from Jews.⁴¹ In 1304,

³⁷ This accords with the studies of the lenders of other Valencian *aljamas* based mainly on the data from notarial records (which do not exist for Morvedre, except for a few fifteenth-century exceptions): J. Hinojosa Montalvo, "El préstamo judío en la ciudad de Valencia en la segunda mitad del siglo XIV," *Sefarad*, 45 (1985), 323; and Furió, "Jueus d'Alzira," 144.

³⁸ See chap. 3.

³⁹ ACA: C 196: 149v–150r (15 March 1298).

⁴⁰ ACA: C 110: 125r (13 April 1298): "Cum intelleximus quod aljame judeorum civitatis et regni Valencie et aliqui judeorum ipsorum intendunt vos constituere procuratorem ad exigendum et recuperandum debita sua et quod vos ipsam procuratorem non vultis recipere absque nostra licencia et mandato. . . ."

⁴¹ ACA: C 110: 66v–67r (1 April 1298): "Vos non credimus ignorare qualiter nos omnia debita in quibus est seu currit usura que judei civitatis et regni Valencie debent aliquibus personis emparari jussimus et emparata [fieri] facimus pro facienda

1306, and especially 1309, the year of the Granadan crusade, the king promised the Jews that he would not grant Christian borrowers moratoria on the payment of their debts. Although these promises were not consistently kept, as the king sometimes "induced" Jewish lenders to give their clients a reprieve, the imbalance in royal policy was glaring.⁴²

The juxtaposition of apparent royal clemency to Jewish usurers, however dear, with royal severity toward Christians in debt to Jews could not have gone unnoticed, especially in ecclesiastical circles. In the thirteenth century churchmen had been expressing considerable concern about the problem of Jewish usury, in particular immoderate usury which, according to some, threatened to impoverish Christians.⁴³ The usury legislation included in the *Privilegium Magnum* almost certainly reflected ecclesiastical as well as lay concerns,⁴⁴ but not until the pontificate of Ramon Despont (1289–1312) did the Valencian church take a more aggressive stance toward Jewish usury.⁴⁵

Even though Ramon Despont did not intervene in Jewish affairs during the first fifteen years of his episcopate, his earliest synodal

restitutione illis a quibus usure exacte fuerint seu extorte." The rest of the letter concerns the plea of Jews of Valencia that certain of their Christian creditors not be allowed to initiate claims against them on the basis of the allegedly usurious loans they had made them.

⁴² ACA: C 134: 147v (15 November 1304): in a royal reprieve granted to a Christian of Morvedre, for a debt to a coreligionist, it is noted, as a matter of policy, "per hanc tamen gratiam non intendimus elongare debita que debentur judeis et pro sponsaliciis mulierum." Yet five weeks later Jaume de Manresa of Morvedre was vouchsafed an *elongamentum* for his debt to Jucef Algehen (C 134: 179v [23 December]). In C 138: 160r (29 March 1306), after noting that he had promised the Jews of Morvedre that he would not grant such reprieves "infra certum tempus," he instructed the local justice to "induce" the Jewish creditors of Simó Pardo to give him a break. ACA: C 206: 29v, 29v–30r (25–27 April 1309) for the promise to all crown *aljamas*.

⁴³ Shatzmiller, *Shylock Reconsidered*, 49–52; Stow, "Papal and Royal Attitudes," 166–169, 176–183; and J. Le Goff, *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages*, trans. P. Ranum (New York, 1988), 17–45.

⁴⁴ In 1278 Bishop Jazpert de Botonach forbade clerics to sell or pledge ecclesiastical ornaments or chalices to "infidels" (Pérez, "Sinodos medievales," 611–613). In this context, the bishop had Jews in mind primarily. Still, this was hardly an expression of great concern about Jewish usury.

⁴⁵ V. Cárcel Ortí, *Historia de la Iglesia en Valencia*, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1986), 1: 92–93, for an overview of the pontificate; Meyerson, "Bishop Ramon Despont," for his Jewish policy; and Assis, *Jewish Economy*, 55, on some ecclesiastical initiatives against Jewish lenders in Catalonia and Aragon proper. Bishop Ramon can be regarded as one of the "prelate purists" identified by Stow, "Papal and Royal Attitudes," 161, 164, 176–180, who elsewhere in Europe had a marked influence on royal policy.

legislation, issued in 1296, demonstrated his preoccupation with the problem of usury, in this case Christian usury. Bishop Ramon's tough stand against usury was consistent with his solicitude for the plight of the Christian poor. Whether founding the almonry of the see of Valencia or excommunicating Christian usurers, his aim was to ameliorate the conditions of the indigent.⁴⁶ The bishop's eventual offensive against Jewish moneylending did not, however, result simply from the care of a pastor for the poor of his flock; rather, personal conversion prompted his activism. In 1303 Bishop Ramon entered the Dominican Order. He vigorously followed the line of leading thinkers and canonists of the Order, like Thomas Aquinas and Ramon de Penyafort, who opposed all usury, Christian or Jewish.⁴⁷

Bishop Ramon initiated his campaign against Jewish usury in the winter of 1305, around the same time he was threatening the destruction of Morvedre's synagogue, an action also inspired by his new allegiance to the Dominican Order and its proselytizing agenda. In a campaign that dragged on for some four years, the bishop and the episcopal Official, his delegate and judicial substitute, adopted two tactics for stamping out Jewish usury. They enjoined notaries and municipal justices, the linchpins of the system facilitating Jewish usury, not to cooperate with Jewish lenders, threatening ecclesiastical penalties if they disobeyed. They also encouraged the Jews' Christian clients to accuse the Jews of demanding or collecting interest exceeding the set royal rate (*ultra cotum*).⁴⁸

King Jaume's reactions to the activism of Bishop Ramon and his Official were mixed. He was perplexed and outraged by the bishop's opening move in March 1305: an order to notaries to swear not to observe Jaume I's legislation permitting Jewish usury at the royal rate and not to redact the necessary credit instruments. Viewing such a withdrawal of services by the notaries as potentially disastrous for

⁴⁶ Pérez, "Sinodos medievales," 639–641 ("De mercatoribus interrogandis"), 672–675 ("De publicis usurariis," "De manifestis usurariis et penis eorum," and "De clericis usurariis"). ACA: C 111: 195r–v (17 May 1298); and C 114: 40r (29 October 1299) both concern procedure against Christian usurers in the diocese of Valencia undertaken by the crown in conjunction with the bishop. On Bishop Ramon and the poor, Cárcel Ortí, *Historia*, 1: 92–93; and Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, 1: 27.

⁴⁷ Pérez, "Sinodos medievales," 617, on his conversion; and Shatzmiller, *Shylock Reconsidered*, 44–47, 189–190 nn. 3–6 and the literature cited there, on the Dominicans' stance.

⁴⁸ See Meyerson, "Bishop Ramon Despont," for a more detailed treatment of the campaign, including transcribed documents.

the kingdom's economy and for *aljama* and royal finances, Jaume quickly countermanded the bishop's order.⁴⁹ Neither he nor Queen Blanca were at all pleased with the commotion the aggressive Official caused in Morvedre during the summer. The Official admonished the townspeople, including the notaries, to boycott the Jews after some Jewish lenders, on the queen's advice, refused to appear before the episcopal court to answer the charges of immoderate usury laid by Christians whom he had prompted. The Official also excommunicated the municipal justice for having the temerity to hear in his court the petition of a Jewish creditor against a Christian debtor.⁵⁰

Although King Jaume could not be persuaded that Jewish usury was not a necessary evil, he was swayed by the bishop's conviction that Jews charged interest *ultra cotum* in "almost all" of their loan contracts. He therefore ordered in October 1305 a kingdom-wide investigation of the problem and the prosecution of all guilty Jews.⁵¹ Six months later Jaume reached the conclusion that Jewish usury *ultra cotum* was not nearly as widespread as he had been led to believe and that the inquiries had served mainly to embolden Christian

⁴⁹ ACA: C 235: 201v (26 March 1305); and C 134: 268v (28 March). Just two months earlier King Jaume had reiterated his grandfather's provision that Jewish and Christian parties to a loan contract swear before a notary to observe the royal *cotum* (ACA: C 131: 37r [25 January]). The bishop was also intervening against foreign Christian (in this case Genoese) creditors who had lent money to local Christians at interest (C 136: 119v [16 July 1305]).

⁵⁰ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 19, no. 2415 (13 August 1305). These events concerned Queen Blanca in particular because Jaume had granted her Morvedre as part of her marriage gift. The bishop and the justice, Jaume de Manresa, had clashed before. In March 1304 Bishop Ramon accused Manresa of having fraudulently sold to the diocesan almonry the rights to rents from certain properties near Morvedre (C 131: 119v). C 236: 207v (12 July 1306), which concerns the case of an unnamed Jew of Morvedre accused of having received usury *ultra cotum*, indicates that some normalcy in procedure had returned by the following summer. True, the Christian plaintiff (also unnamed) filed suit in the court of the Official, but the Official did not attempt to arraign the Jew. Moreover, when the justice nonetheless proceeded, on behalf of the Jew, to collect the interest from the Christian, the Official did not excommunicate him. Instead the Official turned to King Jaume, who ruled that the money in question should be deposited with some trustworthy moneychanger until a final decision was reached.

⁵¹ ACA: C 236: 55r-v (23 October 1305). The two citizens commissioned to conduct the investigations were Ramon de Poblet and Berenguer Tholosani, a lawyer. The approach taken by King Jaume here was consistent with that of the papacy which was still inclined to permit "moderate" Jewish usury, in contrast to the more radical canonists and bishops, and the French and English kings whom they swayed, who called for the extirpation of all Jewish usury. See Stow, "Papal and Royal Attitudes."

borrowers to level spurious charges at Jewish lenders. He sent the investigators home. Any Christian with a complaint about a Jewish creditor could, as had always been the case, turn to an ordinary lay judge.⁵²

Thus when Bishop Ramon and his Official launched their final offensive against Jewish usury in the latter half of 1307, they focused their energies on the courts of municipal justices, who were primarily responsible for adjudicating debt cases and executing sentences against debtors. For almost the next two years justices were caught between a rock and a hard place—between a bishop threatening excommunication if they proceeded against Christian debtors and a king demanding action against the debtors, as long as their Jewish creditors could substantiate their claims with notarized documents.⁵³

Bishop Ramon's campaign against Jewish usury and the royal investigation of lending practices it inspired evoked varied responses

⁵² ACA: C 236: 56r (19 April 1306). C 138: 221r (13 May 1306) is a letter to all municipal officials commanding them to follow proper legal procedure in those cases in which Christians appear before them complaining that Jews have received usury *ultra cotum*.

That King Jaume had returned to his prudent self after briefly falling under Bishop Ramon's sway became evident the next year, when Joan de Landriu, rector of the church of Sant Valero in Russafa, denounced seven Jews of Morvedre for stealing vestments, wax, a chalice, and other items from his church (ACA: C 140: 67r [31 October 1307]; C 289: 45r [6 February 1308]). Mostly prominent members of the Jewish community (Jahudà and Abraham Mateix, Abraham Coffe, Jucef Bonet, Jacob Aldoctori, Abraham Abinafia, and Jahudà Abenvives), the defendants were neither desperate nor foolish enough to rob a church. They had obviously made a loan to the rector and received the "stolen" articles as pledges. In 1305–6, when the king was more susceptible to his exhortations, the bishop might well have made such a loan, with its sacrilegious pawning of church property, a *cause célèbre*; but in 1307 he kept quiet. King Jaume and Queen Blanca, however, did not miss the opportunity to collect more revenue from the Jews. They "absolved" each of the "thieves" for the tidy sum of 1,500 sous. (This at least is what Jahudà Mateix paid "ad opus domine Regine." See Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 93–118, for other instances of King Jaume's shrewd manipulation of other sorts of accusations against Jews, Muslims, and lepers for the benefit of the royal treasury.) In 1310 the rector was still complaining that the Jews were refusing to return the articles to him for reason of the settlement they had made with the royal authorities (C 145: 173r–v [21 October]).

⁵³ On 15 March 1308 the king ruled that justices were not to enter any "obligation or condemnation" in their court registers until the Jewish creditor had displayed the notarized contract detailing the "obligation" incurred (*Aureum opus*, 48r, and C 141: 247v for the registered copy). ACA: C 142: 187r (10 September 1308) is a letter of King Jaume enjoining all municipal justices to observe this ruling regardless of the warnings of the bishop and his Official. C 238: 23v–24r (13 January 1309) concerns the efforts of the Official to impede the justice of Xàtiva in his procedure against local debtors and his excommunication of the justice.

from the Christian population. None liked paying interest to Jews and many unsurprisingly leaped at the chance to file suit against them for immoderate usury. After all, in the opinion of the bishop and his underlings, all usury was illicit and so it all could be seen as “excessive.” The royal investigators, moreover, were prepared to admit any Christian claim as valid and proven without even hearing the testimony of Jewish witnesses.⁵⁴ Whatever the legal basis of the Christians’ complaints, the bishop and his Official certainly exacerbated Christian resentment and their sense of being much put upon by Jews. In 1305, and again in 1308, the militancy of the bishop triggered unusually vicious Holy Week violence against the Jews of Morvedre and Xàtiva.⁵⁵

Yet despite the bishop’s crusade, many Christians wanted to conduct business as usual with Jewish lenders. Indeed, King Jaume realized that the disruption of credit networks during the investigations of 1305–6 upset Christians as much as Jews: “nor is it fruitful for Christians who have affirmed contracts with Jews in something.”⁵⁶ Throughout the episcopal campaign notaries continued to redact credit instruments and justices, when possible, to do their job. But it was not clear how long they could withstand episcopal pressure.

By the beginning of 1309 the battle over Jewish usury had reached a critical point: there would be either a return to the status quo obtaining before 1305 or further episcopal agitation, anti-Jewish violence, and dislocation of credit networks. Fortunately King Jaume managed by the spring to convince the bishop that Jewish money-lending did not pertain to his jurisdiction; it was the king’s business.⁵⁷ Jaume had a very good reason that year for desiring the

⁵⁴ ACA: C 137: 63r (21 December 1305). C 137: 70v (31 December) concerns related acts of malfeasance, and 72r (27 December) the Christians who were “maliciously” refusing to indemnify Jews with legitimate claims against them. See Jordan, “Jews on Top”; and *idem*, *French Monarchy and the Jews*, 155–162, for the impact of such investigations on Picardy.

⁵⁵ ACA: C 134: 268v (5 April 1305) regarding Morvedre. Judging by the plea of the Jews of Valencia on 26 December 1304, the bishop’s harangues had already enhanced the ferocity of Christian rioters the previous Easter (C 134: 192r). ACA: C 289: 57r (16 April 1308) for Morvedre; and C 141: 251v (29 April 1308) for Xàtiva. See also chap. 2.

⁵⁶ ACA: C 236: 56r (19 April 1306): “nec est christianis, qui cum judeis contraxerunt in aliquo, fructuosum.”

⁵⁷ I indicate spring 1309 as the culmination of the process through which King Jaume overcame systematic episcopal resistance to Jewish usury, because 4 May 1309 (ACA: C 143: 246r) appears to be the last time, during the pontificate of

bishop to acknowledge the wisdom of this position: he needed to tax his Jewish communities heavily to finance the campaign against Almería. A fervent supporter of the king's plans to attack the sultanate of Granada, Bishop Ramon finally understood why Jewish moneylenders had to be allowed to collect their debts.⁵⁸

The bishop kept his nose out of Jewish affairs for the remainder of his pontificate. None of his successors ever conducted such a provocative campaign against Jewish usury. A desultory effort by Bishop Ramon de Gaston (1312–48) to prevent the justice of Xàtiva from acting against Christians indebted to local Jews met with a round rebuke from King Jaume.⁵⁹ Yet, even if the withdrawal of the bishops from the fray made the problem of Jewish moneylending less explosive, the problem did not disappear. As long as Jewish and Christian taxpayers were caught up in the seemingly perpetual cycle of moneylending, royal taxation, and debt collection, the litigation and ill will generated by Jewish usury could at best subside to a low level; at worst it cast a pall over relations between Jews and their Christian neighbors. Royal taxation was the key variable that shifted the balance; high rates sent Jews and Christians scrabbling for funds and put them at loggerheads. Hence, during the second decade of the fourteenth century, when King Jaume's fiscal demands were, relatively speaking, reasonable, few voices were raised over credit issues. But during the 1320s, when royal taxes peaked, there was a real clamor.

Ramon Despont, that Jews, in this case the Jews of the capital, complained about the widespread and "malicious" evasion of Christian debtors. However, in contrast to the complaints treated in earlier documents, the representatives of the *aljama* did not mention the involvement of the bishop or his Official. The bishop's activities might still have left some officials a bit gun-shy. For several months the royal judge, Guillem de Jaffer, avoided hearing the appeal of Jucef Abenivives of Morvedre. The Queen's bailiff, Enric de Quintavall, had initially decided against him after Berthomeu de Na Masa, a resident of Albalat, accused him of usury *ultra cotum* (ACA: C 289: 133v [28 September 1309], and 144r [1 May 1310]). In any case, the end of episcopal agitation and widespread Christian resistance did not mean an end to litigation between individual Jews and Christians over debt.

⁵⁸ See chap. 3, Table 3, for the taxes subsidizing the Almería campaign; and Rubio, "De l'expansió a la crisi (1304–1347)," in *Història*, 2: 192.

⁵⁹ ACA: C 159: 288v (6 March 1317). In 1325, when the Official of the bishop of Tortosa excommunicated the justice of Fadrell, a town near Castelló, for adjudicating *causas usurarias* between local Christians, Prince Alfons reminded him that it is the "usage" in the kingdom of Valencia that cases of usury are handled and punished in secular courts (ACA: C 373: 111v–112r [1 April]).

The decade began with King Jaume exacting from the Jews the subsidy for the purchase of the county of Urgell and promising the Jews not to grant their debtors any reprieves for a five-year period.⁶⁰ He next issued directives to all royal officials: they must compel all debtors to requite their Jewish creditors.⁶¹ Anticipating Christian hostility and aggression in the wake of heavy royal taxation and debt collection, the Jews of Valencia made a point, little more than a week after the orders were sent, of asking King Jaume to provide for their protection during Holy Week and other times.⁶²

As it turned out, the Jews were subjected not so much to physical abuse as to legal harassment. Sometime before March 1322 King Jaume commissioned officials to investigate the alleged immoderate usury of some Jews.⁶³ Since he was demanding the repayment of Jewish creditors, it was only fitting that he ensure that the interest collected was licit. Christian debtors, themselves rendering higher taxes for the king's Sardinian campaign, took the investigations as a signal for them to denounce Jews for usury *ultra cotum*. In the eyes of magistrates and of the debtors themselves, a royal investigation lent legitimacy to any such charges, however spurious. Jews in the capital and in towns throughout the kingdom complained that the criminal justice of Valencia was overstepping the bounds of his jurisdiction and arresting Jews—and sometimes releasing them on bail—

⁶⁰ For the subsidy and the promise, see chap. 3, Table 3. ACA: C 170: 222r (15 October 1320): the king reminds officials in Xàtiva that the *elongamenta* he granted to Muslims of the town are not to apply to debts owed to local Jews. Dire circumstances, however, moved King Jaume to grant moratoria on the payment of all debts. In 1321 the people of Silla, under the lordship of the Order of Montesa, were the recipients "propter ruinam et inundationem aquarum" (C 172: 125v–126r [21 November]).

⁶¹ ACA: C 171: 153v (2 January 1321), which includes the king's explanation for the directive: "in proximo nobis solvere teneantur [Jews of kingdom] quandam sumam peccunie pro grandi nostro servicio. Idcirco ut judei predicti ad solutionem dicte summe peccunie sufficere possint. . . ." C 170: 295v (30 December 1320) is the same order to officials in Oriola and Elx.

⁶² ACA: C 171: 155r (13 January 1321). The Jews of the southern region ("beyond Xixona") made a similar plea (C 170: 295v [4 December 1320]). Cf. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 222–223, for a different, complementary emphasis. These circumstances, of which the kingdom's Jews had prior experience, perhaps also contributed to the decision of the Jews of Morvedre to request the construction of walls around their quarter, on which see chap. 2.

⁶³ ACA: C 177: 32r (8 March 1322) concerns the investigation of certain Jews in the city of Valencia, but C 175: 126r (27 May 1322) makes it clear that the king had commanded the investigation of "some" Jews in other places in the kingdom.

for illicit usury. Even the civil justices, under whose purview such cases properly fell, were trying Jews thus denounced without admitting as evidence their own testimony or that of other Jewish witnesses. Because King Jaume had big plans for his Jews in 1322—in the form of an 80,000-sous subsidy for the Sardinian expedition—he admonished officials to follow proper procedure and, in May, suspended all investigations into Jewish usury for a period of ten months.⁶⁴ He also granted Jewish taxpayers a ten-month moratorium on the payment of their debts.⁶⁵

Christian debtors were not supposed to receive such reprieves, but the king made allowances for those who joined the expeditionary force being sent to Sardinia. Still, they had to make arrangements for securing their debts.⁶⁶ In 1323 some debtors used the pretext of participating in the Sardinian enterprise to obtain moratoria from sympathetic royal officials. The officials, who sometimes dragged their feet when bid to pressure indebted coreligionists, were quick to believe their stated intentions to board royal galleys. King Jaume therefore required officials to make sure that the debtors were indeed “going personally on the said voyage” before doling out the reprieves.⁶⁷

During the final years of Jaume II's reign, 1325–27, when the cumulative effects of grinding fiscal exploitation were compounded

⁶⁴ ACA: C 177: 32v (8 March 1322) regarding the criminal justice; and 32v–33r (same date) regarding the civil justices. C 175: 126r (27 May 1322) orders a halt to investigations throughout the kingdom; this had already been done on behalf of the Jews of the capital in March (C 177: 32r). For the Sardinia subsidy of 1322, see chap. 3, Table 3.

⁶⁵ ACA: C 175: 260r (18 July 1322). After the end of this ten-month period, the king granted moratoria of three years to seven Jewish debtors from Morvedre; together they owed 1,040 sous to unnamed Christians or Muslims (C 179: 64r–v [5 June 1323]).

⁶⁶ ACA: C 177: 42v–43r (5 March 1322). Jews complained that officials were not observing the king's orders in this regard. However, participants in the Sardinia expedition who owed money to the bishop of Valencia or to those farming his fiscal revenues were not to receive any reprieves of this kind—C 180: 192r–v (17 October 1323).

⁶⁷ ACA: C 179: 63v–64r (6 June 1323) responds to the complaints of all Valencian *aljamas*, and 209r (23 July 1323) to that of the *aljama* of Valencia. ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 37 (15 July 1323) is a letter from the civil justice of Valencia to the king in which he recounts the king's command “que los dits ellongaments son estats atorgats en favor del feel viatge de Sardenya e contra lo privilegi als dits juheus atorgat, e que no es intencio vostra los dits allongaments valen a aquells qui no son anats personalment en lo dit viatge.” C 180: 140r (30 September 1323) deals with the problem of official foot-dragging in the kingdom of Valencia, and 181v (14 October 1323) in Oriola. Similar letters were sent to officials in various towns in Aragon and Catalonia (140r).

by serious agricultural shortages, Christian debtors became more evasive, Jewish creditors more insistent, and local officials less cooperative.⁶⁸ All the Valencian *aljamas* protested about the delaying tactics of debtors and conniving officials. As explained by the Jews of Morvedre, some residents of the town and its *terme* were arguing that even though they had formally obliged themselves, before notaries in the court of the local justice, to requite their creditors on a specific day, such obligations really had no legal force. The justice, therefore, could not take action against them if the day passed and the creditor remained unpaid.⁶⁹ Morvedre's Jews may have been unique in having to contend with this particularly lame legal maneuver. But there were other "evasions" and "objections" (*diffugia, exceptiones*) used by debtors throughout the kingdom that made debt collection a maddeningly litigious and lengthy process.⁷⁰ When the debtors were the vassals of seigneurs, moving against them was doubly difficult, for it entailed crossing jurisdictional boundaries. As Jews of Morvedre discovered when lodging claims against tenants of the lordships of Betxí and Toga, seigneurial officials, Christian and Muslim, were not inclined to act at the behest of municipal or even royal authorities.⁷¹

The evasive tactic most commonly adopted by Christian debtors was to accuse Jews of charging illegally high rates of interest. They knew that local justices would at least give them a hearing in court and thus a little more breathing room.⁷² In one instance, in the spring of 1326, eleven Jewish moneylenders from Morvedre informed the king that their clients were unduly delaying debt payment through such lawsuits. Their counterparts from other *aljamas* were voicing the

⁶⁸ Rubio, "Crisis agrarias," 139–146. In August 1326 the municipality of Morvedre informed the king that "maiozem partem fructuum" was lost because of a hailstorm (ACA: C 189: 205r–v).

⁶⁹ ACA: C 187: 251v–252r (1 May 1326).

⁷⁰ ACA: C 187: 252r (10 May 1326) for Morvedre; 256r–v for Xàtiva; and 265v for Valencia. The king insisted that unless the debtors produced a legitimate public instrument in their support, their objections should not even be considered. Even then, with final decision pending, execution on the property of the debtor was not to be delayed.

⁷¹ ACA: CR Jaume II, caixa 133, no. 94 (7 May 1325) regarding Betxí; and ACA: C 373: 203v (same date) for Toga.

⁷² ACA: C 187: 225v (3 May 1326). Sometimes local bailiffs conducted *inquisitiones* of Jewish usury at the instance of royal prosecutors acting on behalf of anonymous plaintiffs. Jewish lenders complained that in such cases there was no *legittimo querelante*. They could hardly defend themselves much less collect the money owed them.

same complaints. King Jaume rightly suspected that most of these charges against Jewish lenders lacked substance. He was also impatient to collect revenue from the Jews and realized that he could not do so if the money lent by Jews—his money ultimately—got tied up in local courts. He therefore instructed magistrates first of all to compel debtors to pay what they owed; at the same time they should have the Jewish creditors, along with suitable guarantors, swear before them to remunerate the debtors, and to pay stipulated penalties, should it be proved that they had indeed charged usury *ultra cotum*. This was hardly a foolproof plan, but it seems to have had the desired effect of reducing the number of spurious charges. The widespread resistance and evasion of Christian debtors diminished after the summer of 1326.⁷³

Despite King Jaume's avidity for Jewish subsidies, the receipt of which hinged on the Jews' collection of debts owed them, he could not ignore the plight of truly indigent Christian debtors. Even as Jaume conferred with his advisors about capturing Sardinia or about the many thousands of sous he hoped to receive from his Valencian subjects, their pleas reached him. Since he had promised the Jews not to grant reprieves to debtors—a promise he generally honored in order to keep money flowing through Jewish hands to the royal treasury—he could not himself give impoverished debtors the relief they needed. Instead he placed the onus on the Jewish moneylenders themselves. Jaume would only order royal and municipal officials to "induce" the Jews to grant moratoria to debtors; the final decision was left to the Jews.⁷⁴ For example, when Guillemona, the widow of Bernat Huyllar of Cebolla, sought assistance in dealing with the 3,000-sous debt her husband had contracted with Jews of Morvedre

⁷³ ACA: C 187: 214v (28 April 1326) for the eleven Morvedre Jews; 214v (same date) also for Xàtiva; 257v (15 May) for Valencia; C 189: 131r-v (18 July) for Sogorb; and C 376: 161v (18 March 1326) regarding the complaint of "aliquorum judeorum dicti regni." Of course, debt litigation never completely disappeared and there were occasional complaints about officials being "tepidi et remissi" in proceeding against debtors (C 190: 71v-72r [1 April 1327]), but after the summer of 1326 one does not encounter so many royal letters responding to the complaints of so many Jewish communities about the evasion of debtors and dubious lawsuits.

⁷⁴ ACA: C 380: 206r-v (14 October 1327). Here Prince Alfons chides officials in the kingdom of Valencia for not proceeding against those indebted to Jews in cases when the latter had decided *not* to give in to royal inducements. The prince insisted "quod judei ipsi non compellantur ad servandum inductiones ipsas nisi hoc de eorum voluntate procederet."

and Valencia, the king ordered local justices to persuade the Jews effectively (*cum effectu*) to grant her an *elongamentum*, which involved rescheduling her debt payments over a two-year period.⁷⁵

Jewish creditors presented with such inducements were put in an awkward position. Needing to render exorbitant taxes to the crown and, sooner or later, to requite their own creditors, they had to take care that allowing debtors a postponement did not reduce their cash reserves to such an extent that they did not have the wherewithal to meet these obligations. Moreover, and somewhat paradoxically, the sheer volume of business conducted by some Jewish lenders limited the leniency they could show customers as well as their ability to liquidate their own debts. As officials of the *aljama* of Morvedre had explained to Queen Blanca in 1308, some Jews who were tardy in repaying their Christian creditors could not pay the *pena del quart* since practically all of their assets were tied up in their own credit operations.⁷⁶ If not quite like peasants needing credit until the harvest was reaped, Jewish lenders often did not have as much room to maneuver and as much freedom of choice as royal officials and Christian debtors imagined.⁷⁷

Still, resisting royal persuasion was not easy for the Jews, even if the king gave them some latitude. Most importantly, never allowing clients a reprieve did not make good business sense. Those money-

⁷⁵ ACA: C 187: 123r-v (21 March 1326). Other examples are C 189: 262r (13 September 1326), regarding a 5,000-sous debt owed by residents of Montcada to Jews of Valencia, Morvedre, and Llíria; and C 188: 100r-v (22 November 1326), regarding the 4,930 sous owed by various Christians of Carpesa and Montcada to Jews of Morvedre and Valencia.

⁷⁶ ACA: C 289: 72v (13 June 1308): "quod cum aliqui ipsorum judeorum, pro excusantis quartis de aliquibus condemnationibus pene quartina quibus obligati sunt in dicta curia [of the justice of Morvedre], asserunt pro solutione facienda creditoribus suis debita sua, cum eorum patrimonia maxime in nominibus consistent. . . ." Comprehending the Jewish lenders' predicament, the queen asked the justice and *quartoner* to indulge them, presumably until their clients repaid them. The queen was not doing the Jews any special favors here, however, for any fines collected from the Jews by municipal authorities reduced the subsidies she and King Jaume could exact from them.

⁷⁷ Of the eight Jews to whom King Jaume conceded a three-year moratorium on the payment of debts to Christians and Muslims in 1323 (ACA: C 179: 64r-v), six were from Morvedre families who engaged in moneylending to some degree: the Asseynos, the Bonets, and the Algehens. One of the Jewish debtors, Jucef Algehen, was a recent immigrant to the capital where one of his creditors from Morvedre, Pere Marescue, continued to pursue him (C 179: 233r [27 July] and C 180: 241v-242r [8 November]). See Emery, *Jews of Perpignan*, 67-72, for the debts of some Jewish lenders with liquidity problems.

lenders for whom lending was a primary occupation had to attract a clientele and cultivate its goodwill. The lenders of Morvedre, many of whose clients lived in towns and on lordships outside the municipal district, could not have regularly traveled about lending money and collecting debts without the cooperation and goodwill of local officials and debtors. Even without the king's suggestions, it must have been normal practice for Jewish creditors to grant moratoria to especially needy clients and to renegotiate payment schedules with them extrajudicially.⁷⁸ A late payment was better than no payment at all. Besides, antagonizing clients and their families and friends—or entire villages—was dangerous. Yet the grasping monarch did not often allow the Jews the luxury of patience and benignity. Each year Jewish lenders had to balance the needs of the king, of their families and communities, and of their clients. Sometimes someone was going to be dissatisfied.

During the quarter-century following the death of Jaume II the linkage of the Jews' moneylending to their ability to subsidize the crown remained strong. The regime of internal taxes which King Jaume had authorized the Jews of Morvedre to institute in 1327 for the expeditious payment of royal subsidies included a levy on the profits from usury. The tax amounted to 3 diners per pound (1.25 percent) of the loans that were recorded in notarized contracts or justice registers, and 2 diners per pound (.8 percent) of the smaller loans made in exchange for pawns. The regulations obliged lenders to swear under oath to pay the tax before the administrators and farmers of the levies, and to reveal to the tax farmers the details of their loans, whether contracted inside or outside the *terme*, within three days of making the loan and returning home.⁷⁹ The solvency of the *aljama* thus depended more directly on the amount of business done by the lenders in the community.

Until the middle of the fourteenth century this business continued to be considerable. Of the forty-five households indemnified after the attack of the Union on the *jueria* of Morvedre in November 1348, eighteen (from eleven distinct lineages), or forty percent, belonged to lineages known to have lent money.⁸⁰ These lenders did a high

⁷⁸ Furió, "Jueus d'Alzira," 148, makes this point well.

⁷⁹ ACA: C 230: 60r–63v (18 June 1327) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 408–422, no. 8].

⁸⁰ Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 429–433. The householders from lending families are Samuel el Rau; Mossé Vives; Salamó, Jucef, Salamó, and Ismael Ballester; Meora

volume of business in rural villages. In 1342, when poor harvests and hailstorms prompted the lord of Almenara, don Olf de Pròixida, to beseech Jewish creditors in Morvedre to reschedule the debt payments of his tenants, the noble stated that his tenants' debts amounted to 30,000 sous—an astounding sum, particularly for a town of at most 200 households.⁸¹

Evidence culled from the one extant register of Johan Beneyto, the *quartoner* of Morvedre between 1348 and 1359, which allows for an estimation of the average size of loans, substantiates this point, for it shows that the aggregate debts of the inhabitants of places like Almenara derived from a large number of small loans.⁸² According to this register, the *quartoner* collected fines from twenty-five Christians owing money to Jews of Morvedre for loans previously contracted (and from six Jews indebted to Christians). The smallest loan was 10 sous and the largest 600 sous. The average loan was 104 sous 3 diners, a deceptive figure as only five loans exceeded 100 sous.

Avinaçara; Maymó, Jahudà, Salamó, and Abraham Coffe; Ismael Allolag; Jucef Passarell; Mossé Bites; Mossé Abenrodrich; Jacob and Isaac Maymó; and Jucef Lobell.

⁸¹ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 15, no. 2036 (15 October 1342): "Expositione humili nobilis et dilecti nostri Elfi de Proxida didicimus continente quod homines sui de Almenara propter sterilitates messium et fructuum aliorum que in dicto loco et eius terminis retroactis temporibus vigerunt et specialiter anno presenti quo fuerunt vastati grandinis tempestate tanta sunt pressi penuria et gravati oneribus debitorum quod si ad ea solvenda compellerentur non sufficerent alimenta . . . mandamus quatenus illos judeos quod vobis nominaverint homines prelibati ex parte nostra . . . inducatis ut ipsos homines velint a debitis que per eos dictis judeis debentur singulariter et distincte usque ad quantitatem videlicet triginta milium solidorum regaliū Valencie elongare penis tamen et usuris cessantibus quibuscumque ad tres annos . . . dum tamen dicti homines assecuraverint idonee coram vobis quod in fine cuiuslibet dictorum trium annorum tertiam partem dictorum debitorum solvant suis creditoribus antefatis." Almenara had 108 hearths in 1493 (E. Guinot, "Senyoriu i reialenc al País València a les darreries de l'època medieval," in *Lluís de Santàngel i el seu temps* [Valencia, 1992], 191); given the significant demographic decline that occurred in many towns in the northern half of the kingdom in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (see, e.g., P. Iradiel, "L'evolució econòmica," in *Història*, 2: 268), somewhat less than 200 hearths seems a reasonable estimate for the decades prior to the Black Death.

⁸² In general, royal letters responding to the pleas of insolvent debtors are not very helpful for determining the size of Jewish loans. They are, first of all, too sparsely scattered chronologically to permit any meaningful quantitative treatment. Secondly, in those cases in which the plaintiffs actually mentioned the amount of money owed, the stated quantities sometimes represent the aggregation of several distinct loans and shed little light on the size of the latter. Thirdly, it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain how much of a particular debt mentioned was principal and how much interest. See, e.g., the cases cited in n. 75.

Twenty loans, then, were less than 101 sous and sixteen less than 61 sous. The loans break down as follows:⁸³

10–20	sous:	9
21–40	sous:	1
41–60	sous:	6
61–80	sous:	1
81–100	sous:	3
101–150	sous:	1 . . .
251–300	sous:	2
301–350	sous:	1 . . .
551–600	sous:	1

Not all of these loans, however, were contracted by individuals or individual families. One of the largest loans, of 300 sous, was made by Mossé Bites to four Christians from the villages of Moncofa and Canet.⁸⁴ Even some of the smaller loans were extended to groups: Meora Avinaçara first loaned 30 sous to Andreu Febrer, Anthoni Megeles, and Bernat Fillol, and later another 100 sous to just Febrer and Fillol.⁸⁵ Most of the small loans were probably made to peasant families to tide them over during the difficult winter months between harvests.⁸⁶

The records of the *quartoner* also indicate just what a high-pressure business moneylending still was, as lenders living in the red

⁸³ ARV: MR 9829: “Compte d’en Johan Beneyto, vehi de la vila de Murvedre del offici de la quarterneria de la dita vila, lo qual regi per comissio del Senyor Rey.” The first of the Jews’ claims (*reclams*) considered here was made on 12 May 1348 and the last on 29 July 1359. There is no way of knowing when the loans were first contracted. Though limited, the data presented here accords well with that from fifteenth-century Castelló presented by Magdalena, “*Cort del Justícia*,” 87: of the 200 monetary loans contracted, 134 were less than 100 sous and 96 less than 60 sous.

⁸⁴ ARV: MR 9829: 15r. The borrowers were Pasqual Martí and his wife Elichsen of Moncofa, Bernat Ponç, also of Moncofa, and Macià Miquel of Canet. Similarly, Furió, “Jueus d’Alzira,” 146, finds that usually groups of borrowers (here almost all Muslims) contracted the largest loans.

⁸⁵ ARV: MR 9829: 34v for the first loan, and 41r for the second loan. As in the case of many of the debtors listed here, the borrowers’ place of residence is not indicated.

⁸⁶ This is a reasonable supposition, supported by the studies of Assis, *Jews of Santa Coloma*, 67–70; Furió, “Jueus d’Alzira,” 146; and A.J. Mira Jodar, “Els diners dels jueus: activitats econòmiques d’una família hebrea al món rural valencià,” *Revista d’Història Medieval*, 4 (1993), 115–119. In fifteenth-century Castelló, of the 117 borrowers whose occupations are known, 88 were farmers (Magdalena, “*Cort del Justícia*,” 88–89).

sweated to collect the sums owed them in order to satisfy their own creditors and the king. Of the six Jews from whom the *quartoner* collected fines for nine distinct unrequited debts to Christians, all were moneylenders. Only two of the debts exceeded 100 sous, the largest being 142 sous 5 diners; the other seven debts were all for less than 70 sous.⁸⁷ The small sums involved suggest that the Jews had incurred debts to farmers for loans of foodstuffs in kind, or to artisans for manufactures or services rendered on credit.

The agricultural crises of the 1330s and 1340s made it more difficult for Pere III to persist in the exorbitant taxation of the Jews and in the imbalanced treatment of Jewish-Christian credit relationships which had long been integral to the monarchy's fiscal policy. The king could not very well honor his promises to Jewish lenders not to grant moratoria to Christian debtors when procedure against the latter was likely to force them and their families to go begging. "Out of a sense of piety," he stayed for two years all action Jews from Morvedre and Valencia could have taken against an insolvent Christian couple from Vinalesa.⁸⁸ The concession of such reprieves to individual families, or the rescheduling of the payment of the huge debt amassed by the people of Almenara to Morvedre's Jewish lenders, temporarily reduced the taxable income of some Jewish families and diminished the funds on which the *aljama* could draw in its constant effort to render the king his due.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ ARV: MR 9829: Ismael Allolag for 20 sous (18r); Salamó Coffe for 112 sous (4v); Jahudà Coffe for 60 sous (7r); Astruc Alorqui for 13 sous 6 diners (29r), 12 sous and 68 sous (44v); Samuel el Rau for 22 sous (41r) and 20 sous (47r); and Meora Avinaçara for 142 sous 5 diners (47r). See also, for instance, ACA: C 641: 127r (November 1346), which concerns the debts of Samuel Abinafia and Astruc and Benvenist Coffe to certain villagers of Canet.

⁸⁸ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 27, no. 3713 (9 January 1339): "Nos igitur cum pre-textu cuiusdam privilegii per nos concessi judeis dictorum locorum de non elongandis debitis ipsorum infra certum tempus solutionem dictorum debitorum non debeamus elongare, tamen in premissis providere volentes intuitu pietatis volumus ac vobis et cuilibet vestrum mandamus quatenus judeos quos dicti conjuges [Duran Martí and his wife Maria] vobis duxerunt nominandos . . . inducatis ex parte nostra ut solutionem dictorum debitorum . . . ad duos annos . . . velint elongare et elongent." Duran and Maria owed their creditors 400 sous and alleged that the interest on the original loan had compounded. In a case like this, a command to "induce" the Jews was a command to compel them.

⁸⁹ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 15, no. 2036 (see n. 81). The vicissitudes of nature, such as the hailstorms which struck Almenara, ultimately reduced *aljama* resources in another way: the Jews who owned or leased land or who farmed agrarian rents were hurt by low yields and were also left with fewer taxable assets.

When royal moratoria or modified payment schedules were not forthcoming to relieve families and communities struggling to pay back loans in times of scarcity and high grain prices, they adopted familiar ploys to hamstring insistent Jewish creditors. In 1337 the indebted peasants of Massamagrell convinced a royal magistrate, Gonzalo Cascant, to conduct an ad hoc investigation of the alleged immoderate usury of Jewish lenders from Morvedre and to confiscate the Jews' letters of credit as part of the inquiry. The king, however, was immediately suspicious of the villagers because, instead of making use of the ordinary courts, they had recruited Cascant. He therefore voided Cascant's investigation and demanded procedure against the debtors.⁹⁰

In these hard times the Valencian church again voiced its concern about usurers, Jewish and Christian, and their putative exploitation of the Christian poor. Representatives of the ecclesiastical estate requested in the Corts of 1342 that King Pere appoint a deputy who, in association with a delegate of the bishop of Valencia, would conduct investigations of usurers. Pere did not accede to this request, probably because the clergy intended Jews as well as Christians to be the objects of the investigations.⁹¹ Realizing that the Valencian church was inimical to Jewish usury at whatever rate of interest, and that its officials were thus ready to seize on any complaint of a Christian debtor no matter how unfounded, the king feared that episcopal investigation and interference would frequently disrupt the already diminishing flow of money from Christian debtor to Jewish creditor to royal treasury. He therefore also objected to episcopal inquiries

⁹⁰ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 26, no. 3609 (7 March 1337). Rubio, "*Mal any primer*," 484–486, discusses the poor harvests that continued to afflict the kingdom and that moved King Pere in 1336 and 1337 to prohibit the export of grain. Some years later Pere barely raised an eyebrow when a poor Christian of Morvedre, Domingo Senyellar, accused local Jews of having loaned him money at interest *ultra cotum*. Senyellar asserted that he had even paid the Jews back, but that since he had not bothered to get witnesses or a notarized record of the act—"de verbis eorum et legalitate confidendo"—the Jews were denying it. Rather than calling for action against the Jews on the basis of allegations that could not be substantiated, Pere simply stayed all procedure against Senyellar for reason of debt for a period of four years (ACA: C 650: 7v–8r [6 March 1348]).

⁹¹ *Furs*, 4: 98, Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. V: "Rationabile videretur quod dominus rex deberet deputare aliquem bonam personam quae associaretur deputato per episcopum ad inquisitiones faciendas contra usurarios. . . ." Considering that the *supplicationem brachii ecclesiastici* began by recalling previous royal legislation regulating the practices of Jewish lenders, Jews in all likelihood were meant to be the primary objects of the investigations.

into the usurious practices of Jews in Valencia and Teruel in 1346.⁹² Later in his reign, when the Official of the bishop of Tortosa, whose jurisdiction extended as far south as Almenara, commanded some Jews of Castelló to appear before his court to respond to the charges of "excessive usury" that Christians of Almassora had leveled against them, Pere reminded him that it was for the king to decide whether or not the Jews had exacted interest *ultra cotum*, since it was the king, after all, who had set the legitimate rate of interest. He further pointed out that the matter could not possibly pertain to an ecclesiastical magistrate "who can or must be in disagreement with such a rate of interest."⁹³

Apparently very little had changed since the reign of Jaume II, except the severity of agricultural problems. The church still opposed Jewish usury, though less stridently, and the king still insisted on its necessity. Even so, the monarchy's arguments for Jewish usury were somewhat less compelling than they had been in the time of Jaume II, because, as King Pere recognized, the Jewish *aljamas* could no longer manage the same huge subsidies they had once regularly rendered. The *aljamas'* coffers were more depleted in the 1340s as a consequence of the king's inability to keep all their creditors at bay. Among the latter were members of a new group of influential Christian

⁹² ACA: C 643: 63r-v (19 July 1346), regarding the Jews of Valencia; and C 642: 50v (1 October 1346), regarding the Jews of Teruel.

⁹³ ACA: C 1210: 133r-v (1 July 1365): "debuissetis [the Official of the diocese of Tortosa] considerare et etiam quod quamvis de jure comuni usura toleranda non sit, tamen judei terre nostre ex nostri permissu sive licencia usque ad illum cotum quod nos ordinamus vel eis permittimus possunt usuras recipere, et hoc nobis ex nostra regia noscitur liquido pertinere, et quod usuram aliquam reciperent, quamvis provisione ecclesie sive licencia esset fatuum dicere et absurdum, si enim cotum huiusmodi servent vel ne judei predicti nunquid ad nos qui ipsum cotum edidimus et non ad iudicem ecclesiasticum quem posse vel debere de tali coto esset dissonum ordinare proculdubio pertinebit nullomodo posset hoc rationabiliter contradici." Pere, however, was not unsympathetic to the concerns of the church regarding specifically Christian usury. In 1368 Bishop Vidal de Blanes discovered that Christian usury had increased in almost all the places in his diocese (Pérez, "Sínodos medievales," 745-746). Shortly thereafter Pere commissioned deputies to investigate and proceed against Christian usurers in conjunction with church officials. In the Corts of 1371 and 1374 the representatives of the royal towns complained about the procedure of royal officials and commissioners in the investigation and prosecution of usurers. In neither instance was King Pere (or Prince Joan in 1374) willing to modify the procedures. See *Furs*, 4: 99-100, Llibre IV. Rúbrica XIV. VI-VII. Extant visitation records from the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries evince continual concern about Christian usury—see *Visitas pastorales de Valencia (siglos XIV-XV)*, ed. M.M. Cárcel Ortí and J.V. Boscá Codina (Valencia, 1996).

creditors, the *censalistas*, who utilized a new credit mechanism, the *censal*, or its variant, the *violari*. King Pere did not wish to alienate them by delaying action on their claims. Hence in 1342, when he granted the *aljama* of Morvedre a moratorium on the payment of debts to its Christian and Muslim creditors, he excepted “the *violaris* these Jews are obliged to pay.”⁹⁴

The *censal* was a loan that took the form of a contract of sale (*carregament*), in which the borrower, or vendor, sold to the lender, or buyer, the right to receive periodically a pension (or *pension de censal*) for a certain price, that is, the capital loaned. The rate of interest on the capital borrowed through the *censal* was 7.69 percent in the latter half of the fourteenth century. With the debtor rendering pensions periodically to the creditor, the *censal* contract could be maintained indefinitely until the debtor, or his or her heirs, reimbursed the creditor for the capital borrowed. A variant of the *censal*, the *violari* was limited to a set period, usually one or two lifetimes, after which the pension was automatically extinguished. Because of its limited temporal scope, the loan contracted through the *violari* carried a rate of interest twice as high as that of the *censal*.⁹⁵

Since they need not liquidate the debts acquired through the sale of *censals* until they chose to do so, or could gradually repay the money borrowed through the sale of *violaris* over a long period of time, municipalities and *aljamas* found these credit mechanisms ideal for raising funds quickly to meet their immediate necessities. The danger in this mode of deficit financing was that the amount of pensions that municipalities or *aljamas* owed to their various creditors (*censalistas*) could mount to such an extent that they would have to sell still more *censals* or *violaris* simply to remain on schedule with their pension payments.

⁹⁴ ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 12, no. 1585 (5 March 1342): “ipsa aljama et fideiussores pro et cum eis obligatos non compellantur ad solvendum aliqua debita que debeant christianis et sarracenis qualicumque ratione seu causa exceptis violariis ad que ipsi judei solvere sunt obligati.” ACA: C 641: 127r (November 1346) concerns another “gratiam elongamenti seu supersessionis . . . pro reparatione judeorum ipsius aljame,” which the justice of Canet was not permitted to infringe on behalf of certain peasant creditors from his village. Villagers did not possess nearly the same clout as the *censalistas*.

⁹⁵ A. García Sanz, “El censal,” *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 37 (1961), 281–310; and A. Furió, “Crédito y endeudamiento: el censal en la sociedad rural valenciana (siglos XIV–XV),” in *Señorío y feudalismo*, 1: 501–534.

Over the course of the 1340s the *aljama* of Morvedre began to use the *censal*, or the *violari*, as the primary means of financing its public debt.⁹⁶ The *aljama*'s adoption of this credit mechanism was roughly contemporaneous with its rapid and widespread diffusion among the municipalities of the kingdom. Appearing first in Barcelona between 1330 and 1340, *censals* were in use in the city of Valencia by 1341, and were of increasing importance to the municipal finances of Alzira from 1351 and of Valencia from 1355.⁹⁷ The rapid acquisition of capital for paying subsidies to the king was for town governments as pressing a motive to adopt the *censal* as it was for Jewish *aljamas*. Again, as in the establishment of indirect taxation in the 1320s, the fiscal demands of the crown fostered parallel institutional developments among Christians and Jews.

The *censalistas* who invested their capital in the purchase of *censals* or *violaris* saw it as a fairly secure form of investment yielding moderate and regular returns. These *rentiers* were mainly affluent urban citizens and members of the lesser nobility. While each town had its own local *censalistas* investing in the municipal debt, citizens and nobles from the capital city constituted a significant portion, and frequently the majority, of the creditors of many municipalities in the kingdom. Through purchasing the *censals* sold by municipalities, and later by seigneuries, the moneyed classes in the capital came to dominate the kingdom's credit networks.⁹⁸

They were among the *censalistas* who invested in the public debt of the *aljama* of Morvedre.⁹⁹ Indeed, by 1348 a debtor-creditor relationship had been established between this *aljama* and the citizens of

⁹⁶ E.g., ACA: C 881: 10v (7 June 1346). Here King Pere licenses the *aljama* to sell a *violari* (or *violaris*) worth 1,000 sous, in order to raise funds for paying royal taxes.

⁹⁷ Y. Roustit, "La consolidation de la dette publique à Barcelone au milieu du XIV siècle," *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, 4 (1954), 13–156; Furió, "Crédito y endeudamiento," 513; and A. Furió and F. García, "La economía municipal de Alzira a fines del siglo XIV según un libro de cuentas de 1380–1381," in *La ciudad hispánica durante los siglos XIII al XVI*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1985), 2: 1611–1633.

⁹⁸ Furió, "Crédito y endeudamiento," 515–534; and see P. Viciano Navarro, *Catarroja: una senyoria de l'Horta de Valencia en l'època tardomedieval* (Catarroja, 1989), 99–114, for an analysis of the *censals* purchased between 1390 and 1430 by the lords of Catarroja, residents of Valencia.

⁹⁹ By 1336 the *aljama* of Morvedre was already in debt to one Pere Colom, a citizen of Valencia, "ratione cuiusdam contractus inter ipsum Petrum et dictam aliamam initi." Already owing Colom monetary *penas* as a result of late payment, members of the *aljama* "did not dare to enter the city" (ACA: CR Pere III, caixa 26, no. 3587 [8 August 1336]). The nature of the contract, however, is not stated.

the capital. Shortly after the forces of the Union of Valencia sacked Morvedre's Jewish quarter, King Pere noted that "you the said *aljama* and members are obliged to some people of the aforesaid city [Valencia] and its *terme* for certain *violaris*, *censals*, and other debts."¹⁰⁰ Even as the king saw to the indemnification of his despoiled Jewish subjects, he nonetheless insisted that the Jews pay out the pensions to their *censalista* creditors.¹⁰¹ Too many interests, individual and institutional, already depended, in different ways, on the soundness of the *censal*.

A new credit market was gradually developing; as a result, the alignment of money and power in the kingdom was beginning to change. The *censalistas* were in a position to displace the Jews as the principal purveyors of credit and to free them from their peculiar form of thralldom—to the royal treasury and to the necessity of practicing usury. The Jews' fiscal servitude and the designs of the monarchy had left the Jews little choice but to lend money at interest. True, since so much money passed through their hands, the Jews and their *aljamas* had acquired a certain amount of power and influence with the king. But it was a dangerous and unsatisfying sort of power, one that involved appealing to and enlisting the support of the crown to pressure Christian debtors so that they, the king's prized fiscal serfs, could pay their taxes. Christian borrowers naturally resented Jewish usurers for their transient wealth and apparent power, while the Valencian church deplored them for their oppression of the Christian poor. Episcopal anti-usury campaigns, astronomical royal taxation, or agricultural crises occasionally exacerbated hostility toward the Jews, but violence and litigation were not the rule. As long as Christians needed credit and Jews were uniquely positioned to provide it, very little could change. Jews and Christians, kings and clergy seemed fated to play the same roles ad infinitum. Only the introduction of new credit mechanisms, in which both

¹⁰⁰ ACA: C 655: 58r-v (24 November 1348): "Attendentes etiam vos dictam aljama et eius singulares obligatos existere nonnullis civitatis pretacte et eiusdem termini in quibusdam violariis, censualibus [et] aliis debitis. . . ."

¹⁰¹ The king's grant to the *aljama* of Morvedre of a moratorium on the collection of debts from it evoked complaints from some Christians owed pensions by the *aljama*. ACA: C 655: 166v-167r (28 March 1349) concerns the 800-sous annuity (*violari*) paid to the heirs of the citizen Martí Marçó, and 182r (7 April 1349) the *violari* payments owed to the heirs of Domingo d'Alguayre and of Ponç Granyana, also citizens of the capital. The king pointed out in both letters that it was not his intention to include *censals* and *violaris* in the moratorium.

monarchy and church acquiesced, could alter the way in which Jews and Christians did business and possibly the views they harbored of one another. The *censal* had this potential, but the rebellion of the Valencian Union (1347–48) and the war with Castile (1355–66) knocked the Jews of Morvedre, and many others in the kingdom, off the course they might have taken in the latter half of the fourteenth century.

Still, by the 1380s some of Morvedre's wealthier Jews had begun to invest more of their capital in farming taxes and less in lending than in earlier decades.¹⁰² This shift in investment strategy had less to do with the risks inherent to lending than with changes in the kingdom's credit market brought about by the introduction and spread of the *censal*. Of course, there had always been Christian moneylenders, but only after they adopted the low-interest and legitimate *censal* could they effectively compete with the Jews. Once the *censal* became the credit instrument of choice, the Christian competition consisted not just of professional lenders but of urban patricians, nobles, knights, merchants, affluent widows—of almost anyone with the wherewithal and the desire to invest in relatively low-risk annuities. As the diversified and growing group of Christian *censalistas* purchased annuities from cash-poor kings, municipalities, lords, villages, and *aljamas*, the Jews perforce assumed a lesser role in the kingdom's credit market and invested their money in different, sometimes novel, ways. The change was gradual; not until the fifteenth century, after the Jews had recovered from the calamitous violence of 1391, would a new politics of moneylending clearly emerge. Only then would there be a new and distinct basis for Jewish-Christian relations.¹⁰³

¹⁰² The best example is the Legem family, on whom see chap. 5. Another example is Vidal Sibili of Morvedre, who, in ACA: C 1828: 110v (4 November 1387), is described as having farmed taxes in Castelló with "alios consocios."

¹⁰³ M. Kriegel, *Les juifs à la fin du Moyen Age dans l'Europe méditerranéenne* (Paris, 1979), 99–100, briefly points to the growing importance of the *censal* and the diminishing importance of Jewish credit in fourteenth-century Catalonia. He makes no effort, however, to consider the social and economic effects of these developments in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (neither in Catalonia nor anywhere else), on which see Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*.

CHAPTER FIVE

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

The latter half of the fourteenth century was a period of upheaval and uncertainty for the Jews of Morvedre, as it was for most inhabitants of the kingdom of Valencia, on account of a series of natural and man-made disasters. The Black Death afflicted the kingdom in 1348; it was followed by epidemics of plague in 1362, 1374–75, 1380, 1383–84, and 1395. A series of droughts in 1351, 1352, 1356–58, and 1367–77, and swarms of locusts in 1358–59 added to the miseries of Valencians. The result, after decades of demographic expansion, was a decline in the kingdom's population. The demographic setback, however, did not cause an economic recession like that experienced by Catalonia and other regions of western Europe. On the contrary, because the full effects of the pacification of the Muslim population and the restructuring of rural and urban economies had only begun to be felt in the early fourteenth century, there continued over the rest of the century a general increase in agricultural production as well as growth in Valencian commerce and industry, especially textiles.¹

Notwithstanding the sustained economic growth in many areas of the kingdom over the long term, turmoil and anguish were temporarily the lot of many Valencians, especially in the middle decades of the century, when the ravages of war combined with the horrors of plague and famine. The revolt of the Valencian Union against King Pere in 1347 led to a civil war between royalist and Unionist forces which lasted nearly two years. Even more devastating was

¹ A. Rubio Vela, *Peste negra, crisis y comportamientos sociales en la España del siglo XIV: La ciudad de Valencia (1348–1401)* (Granada, 1979); *idem*, “Els temps difícils (1347–1375),” in *Història*, 2: 208–212; and Furió, *Història*, 122–143, especially 129–131 for data on the increase in agrarian productivity. It is worth noting that the kingdom of Valencia had not experienced prior to 1348 a “Malthusian crisis” stemming from the pressure of an overabundant population on limited resources. Demographic decline was in any case less dramatic in the later fourteenth century than it would be in the fifteenth, when plague continued to strike the kingdom with depressing regularity.

King Pere's war with Pedro I of Castile between 1356 and 1366, for during the final stage of the war, 1363–66, the kingdom of Valencia was the main battleground.

Morvedre, because of its strategic value and proximity to the capital, played a key role in each conflict and felt the effects of warfare more than any other Valencian town. It maintained an uneasy neutrality during the Union's rebellion but was nonetheless attacked by its forces in 1348; fifteen years later Pedro I's army occupied the town, making it the center for Castilian operations in the kingdom. Morvedre's Jewish community consequently suffered calamities that other Valencian *aljamas* avoided and was more than once on the point of extinction.

The Black Death itself did not noticeably worsen relations between Jews and Christians in the kingdom of Valencia or in Morvedre in particular. It struck Valencia city in mid-May 1348, and, according to the *Chronicle* of King Pere, it was killing 300 people each day by the middle of June. The plague raged on until early August, when it petered out.² Since the plague descended from the north, its arrival in Morvedre probably slightly preceded its appearance in the capital. The toll taken by the plague in Morvedre is unknown, but it killed enough "good men" to make it difficult to staff the municipal government. The rector of the local church also succumbed.³

The Black Death also swept through the *jueria* of Morvedre, though it is impossible to know precisely how many Jews it killed. The death of several Jews during the Union's attack on Morvedre on 8 November 1348, just three months after the plague abated, complicates the issue. The extant documentation shows that at the very least twenty-five men and one woman perished between May and 9 November

² Rubio, *Peste negra*, 22–29; and Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 431.

³ On the movement of the plague from the north, see J. Gautier-Dalché, "La peste noire dans les états de la couronne d'Aragon," in *Mélanges offerts à Marcel Bataillon par les Hispanistes français* (*Bulletin Hispanique*, 54 bis [1962]), 65–66. ACA: C 959: 64v–65r (16 May 1349) concerns the "defectu proborum hominum" in Morvedre because of the "generalem epidemiam . . . anno preterito" [transcribed in A. López de Meneses, "Documentos acerca de la peste negra en los dominios de la Corona de Aragón," *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón*, 6 (1956), 351]. For the death of Guillem de Puig, rector of the church of Morvedre, see J. Trenchs Odena, "El reino de Valencia y la Peste de 1348. Datos para su estudio," in *Estudios de Historia de Valencia* (Valencia, 1978), 47. The successor of Puig, Bernat Major, died in 1349.

1348. Plague and Unionist violence together, then, wiped out at least ten percent of Morvedre's Jewish population.⁴

The Christian population of the kingdom of Valencia responded to the horrors of the Black Death with incomprehension and fear. Like Christians elsewhere in Europe, they deemed the plague to be divine punishment for their sins. The bishop and the city fathers of Valencia included in their catalogue of trespasses the sins committed by Christians in the local *jueria* and *moreria* as well as the misdeeds of Jews and Muslims themselves. Nonetheless, the acts of expiatory violence perpetrated against the Jews of some cities and towns in Catalonia did not occur in Valencian towns.⁵ In Morvedre the Black Death at most heightened preexisting tensions between Jews and Christians.

The Jews of Morvedre endured Christian violence in 1348 and other hardships in subsequent years not because they were somehow blamed for the plague but because they were caught between opposing Christian groups: the Union of Valencia and the royalists; invading Castilian armies and the forces of King Pere; the municipalities of Valencia and Morvedre; and the municipalities and the rural lords. The Jews had a specific and unmistakable political identity (or identities). They were, first and foremost, *de jure* "serfs of the royal treasury" and thus "royalist." They were also residents of the town of Morvedre. Depending on the circumstances, either one or both of these identities could, and did, cause them problems.

The capital city, Valencia, played a major role in the history of the people of Morvedre, Jewish and Christian, in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Valencia weathered the various crises of the fourteenth century remarkably well and by the end of the century was indisputably the dominant political and economic force in the kingdom. As the city's commerce and industry expanded, it drew to it a steady stream of immigrants who replenished a population hit

⁴ For the calculations and the documents on which they are based, see M.D. Meyerson, "Victims and Players: The Attack of the Union of Valencia on the Jews of Morvedre," in *Religion, Text, and Society in Medieval Spain and Northern Europe: Essays in Honor of J.N. Hillgarth*, ed. T. Burman, M.D. Meyerson, L. Shopkow (Toronto, 2002), 70–102.

⁵ Rubio, *Peste negra*, 97, for the opinions expressed by the bishop of Valencia and the city council, and 82–101, for the impact of the plague on religious life in general. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 237–245, for an analysis of anti-Jewish violence in the Crown of Aragon in the wake of the Black Death.

hard by outbreaks of plague. Although Valencia's demographic ascent was not constant, the figures are nonetheless telling: the intramural population rose from 26,000 in 1361 to 36,000 in 1418. A Mediterranean port of growing importance, Valencia also became the focal point for the kingdom's commerce, which its merchants increasingly dominated. Its moneyed classes invested more and more of their funds in land, loans, and tax farms throughout the kingdom, so that by the end of the century Valencia was at the center of the kingdom's extensive credit networks and the consumer of a great portion of the kingdom's resources.⁶

The capital's size and economic vigor lent it great political clout. Its leadership of the Union is clear evidence of this, and even though Pere III suppressed the Union, the city maintained its leading role in the kingdom's dealings with the monarchy. The people of Morvedre could hardly escape the capital's economic and political influence; in fact, as will be seen, the town fell under Valencia's jurisdiction for many years. The relationship between Morvedre and Valencia was complex and frequently contentious.

The Jews of Morvedre both suffered and benefited from their town's position in the shadow of Valencia. Valencia was of course the episcopal seat and from it issued the bishop's provocative denunciations of Jewish usury and of the sinful mingling of Christians and Jews. The city's governors, moreover, consciously cultivated and propagated an image of their city as a Christian mercantile republic, an urban ideology that left little room for Muslims and Jews.⁷ For the Jews of Morvedre, just 20 kilometers or so up the coast, such propaganda was a bit ominous. Fortunately it was not parroted by the town fathers. They governed a modest urban center that possessed neither the power nor the wealth such as would have inspired them to mimic the idealism of the capital's patricians. If the leading Christians of Morvedre came to espouse a cause, it was that of getting their town out from under Valencia's thumb. They were otherwise pragmatic and flexible in their efforts to ensure their town's political and economic survival during and after the wars that rocked

⁶ A. Rubio Vela, "Ideologia burguesa i progrés material a la València del Trescents," *L'Espill*, 9 (1981), 11–38; *idem*, "Sobre la població de Valencia en el cuatrocientos (Nota demográfica)," *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura*, 56 (1980), 158–170; *idem*, "Els temps difícils," 212–214; and Furió, "Crédito y endeudamiento," 501, 518–520.

⁷ Rubio, "Ideologia burguesa."

the kingdom. They thus accommodated Jews more easily; by the final third of the century the challenge of rebuilding a war torn town would leave them feeling as if they had little choice.

The sometimes profound impact of the clashes between Morvedre and Valencia on Morvedre's Jews stemmed from political circumstances beyond the Jews' control. The effect of the long-standing antagonism between municipalities and seigneurs on the Jews of Morvedre was, however, very much a result of the Jews' deliberate cultivation of relations with rural lords for economic and fiscal purposes. In moving temporarily to seigneurial domains and crossing jurisdictional boundaries, the Jews had been playing a dangerous game. The lords who welcomed them to their lands to lend money, farm taxes, or even buy homes frequently disputed with the municipality of Morvedre over boundaries, pasture land, irrigation, and the jurisdictions of their respective magistrates.⁸ The mobile Jews thus ran the risk of provoking their Christian neighbors in Morvedre. Enjoying communal autonomy, inhabiting a distinct *jueria*, and paying taxes separately, the Jews were already, in the eyes of some Christians, not quite "of Morvedre." When the Jews sought the patronage of the lords of the hinterland and resided on their estates, they became the "enemy," like the water-hogging, livestock-rustling seigneurs and their vassals.⁹ King Pere observed in February 1346 that Jews were departing Morvedre not only because of the burden of royal taxation but also in response to "the molestations and oppressions" perpetrated by "our officials and many other persons."¹⁰ Perhaps some

⁸ Iborra, *Camp de Morvedre*, 233–238, emphasizes the antagonism between Morvedre and the lords of the lower Palancia well into the early modern period. See also chap. 1 for examples of conflict between the town and the seigneurs over resources.

⁹ J. Caro Baroja, "Mundos circundantes y contornos históricos-culturales," *Revista de Dialectología y Tradiciones Populares*, 29 (1973), 23–47, describes Iberian communities competing for ecological resources as an interlocking series of "enemy horizons." See also T. Mitchell, *Violence and Piety in Spanish Folklore* (Philadelphia, 1988), 11–56. The presence of many Muslim tenants on the seigneuries intensified the strife between townspeople and rural lords. At the beginning of the reign of Pere III, for instance, Christians from Morvedre attacked and robbed the Muslims of Uixó, then under the lordship of the king's uncle, Prince Pere (ACA: C 803: 188r–190r; Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 247). Just how the Jews of Morvedre negotiated this minefield of competing jurisdictions and religious animosities is unclear.

¹⁰ ACA: C 640: 121v (23 May 1346). This letter contains within it a royal letter dated 11 February 1346, which states: "Cum quorundam fidedignorum ratione nobis . . . sit deductum quod tam ratione imensitatum peytarum, contributionum et aliarum diversarum exactionum regalium quas judei aljame judeorum ipsius ville predecessoris nostris et nobis . . . diversimode exsolverunt quam aliis diversis molestia-

Christian citizens of Morvedre had wanted to hasten the flight of local Jews to the lands of those whom they regarded as the Jews' patrons and their opponents, the seigneurs.

Yet the dichotomy between municipal and seigneurial interests was actually blurred by the residence of a good number of lesser lords and knights in Morvedre and their participation in its political life. Thus the bonds that the Jews of Morvedre had forged with seigneurs amounted, in many cases, to affiliations with local elite families of a particular social background. Other Christians of different status had also developed ties with the Jews. There were the investors who needed Jews in town were they to profit from farming the internal taxes of the *aljama*; others who were close enough to Jews to want to threaten tax collectors on their behalf; others who worked for Jewish families as maidservants and wet-nurses; and still others who saw no problem in building a new residence for themselves in the *jueria*, even if some of its Jewish inhabitants did.¹¹ Town politics usually did not significantly influence how such Christians viewed the Jews.

Above and often at the center of the political controversies and wars that convulsed the kingdom and buffeted the Jews of Morvedre stood King Pere III (d. 1387). Throughout his long reign he expressed and acted on the conviction that the Jews were a valuable asset to the monarchy, even if their cries of poverty and tax evasion at times

tionibus et oppresionibus judei ipsi et singulares eorum per officiales nostros aliasque quampluries personas fuerint et sint adeo male . . . pertractati quod plures ex dictis judeis et quasi major pars eorum ad loca diversa . . . sua transtulerunt domicilia cum bonis eorundem. . . ."

¹¹ On Christian farmers of *aljama* taxes, see chap. 3. ACA: C 651: 122v–123r (18/19 February 1348) concerns the fear of the "taxatores" to collect taxes because of the "minitationum quas aliqui ex judeis ipsius aljame et nonnulli cristiani . . . faciunt contra eos." Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 340, n. 2, cites a fourteenth-century document which raises concerns about Christian women working in Jewish households and about liaisons between Jewish men and Christian women. ACA: C 653: 60r (21 May 1348) is a letter to the justice and *mustaçaff* of Morvedre regarding Johanna, the widow of Pere de Gelats of Morvedre, a veteran of the Sardinian campaigns, to whom King Pere had granted "patum vel solarium domorum infra judariam seu callem ville predictae" and permission to have a house built on the site. When Johanna started construction, one of the addressees confiscated the property "ad instantiam aliquorum judeorum dicti callis." The Jews in question may well have been Jahudà Coffe and Jucef Cortovi, whose homes neighbored the lot (as revealed in C 886: 188v–189r [14 February 1348], the original construction permit). Whether they challenged Johanna because of countervailing claims to the property or simply because they did not want a Christian living in the Jewish quarter and next door to them is impossible to say.

suggested otherwise. He therefore continually endeavored to retrieve them from seigniorial lands, to foster their prosperity, to tax them as much as possible, and to protect them. His consistent defense of the Jews derived from his anxiety to manifest his supreme power through safeguarding his patrimony, which included the Jews. His queen, Elionor of Sicily, who counted Morvedre and its Jews among her personal assets, proved to be particularly assertive in this regard, much to the Jews' good fortune. Tradition weighed heavily on King Pere. There had always been Jews in the lands of the Crown of Aragon and they had always been the "royal treasure." These traditions could be abandoned only through the force of social and political revolution. Whether combatting the Union or Pedro I of Castile, King Pere struggled desperately to retain what he regarded as rightfully his. He would not allow the Jews to be lost.

Rebel Unionists and Royalist Jews

Led by the city of Valencia and joined by many of the kingdom's towns, the Union was primarily a rebellion of the urban citizenry against the ever more authoritarian government of Pere III.¹² Between 1344 and 1347 the aims of Pere and his advisors to enhance royal authority and to subvert the traditional *pactista*, or contractual, form of government became especially manifest. They alienated urban elites, especially those in the capital, through their numerous violations of the *Furs*, such as substituting delegated judges for ordinary urban magistrates, and through their heavy taxation of the towns.¹³

Pere gave them the pretext for revolt in March 1347 when, without consulting his subjects in the Corts, he declared his eldest daughter, Constança, heir to the throne, in effect disinheriting his brother Jaume, the rightful heir. This violated the hereditary custom in the Crown of Aragon, which excluded women from the succession, and was yet another example of the high-handed rule of the king and

¹² For a more detailed account of the rebellion of the Union and its attack on the Jews of Morvedre, as well as a discussion of the relevant sources, see Meyerson, "Victims and Players." The fundamental study of the Union of Valencia is that of M. Rodrigo Lizondo, "La Unión valenciana y sus protagonistas," *Ligarzas*, 7 (1975), 133–166.

¹³ King Pere collected 1,200,000 sous from the city of Valencia alone between 1339 and 1346.

his advisors. In May the *Consell* of Valencia convoked the representatives of the three estates to establish a Union in defense of the kingdom's laws and privileges. On 1 June the capital proclaimed a Union unilaterally, in imitation of the newly formed Aragonese Union, which included the nobility and most of this kingdom's towns.¹⁴

The people of the kingdom of Valencia, however, were much more divided than the Aragonese in their support for the Union. Many towns, royal and seigneurial, flocked to the banner of revolt raised by rebel leaders in the capital, but some towns, most notably Xàtiva, joined the royalist alliance headed by Pere de Xèrica, the governor general. The great majority of the nobles sided with the royalists, instinctively distrusting a rebel movement composed mainly of urban oligarchs and artisans, the very people with whom they often clashed over rights to pastures, irrigation water, and the like.¹⁵

Invited by both sides, Morvedre opted for neutrality. The town had, on the one hand, good reason to join the rebels. Like the citizens of other towns, its people resented the abuses and taxation of King Pere's officials. Moreover, the families of the royal counselors Galceran de Bellpuig, the lord of Torres-Torres, and Olf de Pròixida, the lord of Almenara, had a history of conflict with Morvedre. On the other hand, living so close to Valencia naturally made the oligarchs of Morvedre insecure about their town's autonomy and reluctant to accept the capital's direction. As it was, some of Valencia's affluent citizens were creditors of the municipality of Morvedre. But fear of antagonizing Valencia prevented Morvedre's leaders from allying with the royalists.

The Christian inhabitants of Morvedre were in any case not of one mind, nor would they ever be throughout the course of the rebellion. Among the elites there was a staunchly royalist group of knights and lesser nobles. They were sometimes opposed by the vacillating mercantile elites who dominated the town's government. Lesser folk could be swayed one way or another in the heat of the moment.

The first military victories, on 4 and 19 December 1347, went to the Union. Realizing that the situation in the kingdom of Valencia

¹⁴ E. Sarasa Sánchez, "El enfrentamiento de Pedro el Ceremonioso con la aristocracia aragonesa: la guerra con la Unión y sus consecuencias," in *Pere el Ceremoniós i la seva època* (Barcelona, 1989), 35–45. The Aragonese Union was initially led by the disinherited Prince Jaume.

¹⁵ Rodrigo, "Unión valenciana," 161–166; and Narbona, *Valencia, municipio medieval*, 142–150.

was critical, King Pere departed Catalonia for Morvedre at the end of the year. With its fortress, Morvedre had great strategic value as a point from which he might subdue Valencia.

The townspeople received the king and his counselors but nonetheless remained divided, the majority apparently leaning toward the victorious Union. Sometime in January they expelled the royal counselors from the town, but kept King Pere there, virtually a prisoner, until the end of March. While negotiating with the Union and his half-brother Ferran, its new leader since the death of his brother Jaume in November, the king found time to deal with the internal problems of the local Jewish community.

On 24 March he acceded to all the Union's demands and recognized Ferran as his heir. Rumors that Pere intended to leave Morvedre secretly to regroup his forces sparked a popular uprising and moved local leaders, apparently committed to the cause of the Union, to hand the king over to Union commanders from Valencia. Yet even then, when the king was at the mercy of the Union, Morvedre's rebel partisans wished to leave themselves a way out; hence they made rebel leaders in the capital wholly responsible for the king.

In June Pere persuaded the Unionists to permit his exit from Valencia lest they be blamed for his demise from the Black Death then gripping the city. The tide now quickly turned in the king's favor. Royalist forces led by the noble Lope de Luna decisively defeated the Aragonese Unionists at Epila on 21 July. The destruction of the Aragonese Union left the Unionists in Valencia isolated.

Rather than surrendering, the Valencian Unionists grew more radical and aggressive, lashing out at their enemies in the capital and throughout the kingdom. In September the Unionist army attacked the seigneuries belonging to the hated royalist commanders Lope de Luna and Pere de Xèrica.¹⁶ In early November it looted and burned Riba-roja, the lordship of one of the king's majordomos, Ramon de Riusech, slaughtering "many . . . Saracen men and women."¹⁷

Morvedre was the Unionists' next target. They attacked on 8

¹⁶ Meyerson, "Victims and Players."

¹⁷ AMV: Llibres judiciales, Domingo Joan notary (1348): n.f.: "loch de Ribaroja . . . e aqui ociren molts e diverses serrahins e serrahines." On this source, see M.A. Cuevas Granero, "Una nueva fuente para el conocimiento de la Unión valenciana: los 'Judicaris' del Archivo Municipal de Valencia," in *VII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1962), 3: 155–160.

November at around midnight. After breaking through the town walls, Unionist soldiers proceeded to the central plaza. There, joined by local partisans, they planted the Union's banner and shouted "Long live the Union!" The troops and the local sympathizers then set about achieving their two main goals: eliminating local royalists and ensuring the allegiance of Morvedre to the Union. The townspeople, even some of the Unionists among them, had no doubt wavered again after news of the crown's victory at Epila reached them.

The Unionists descended on the homes of royalists like Bonafonat de Vallebrera, Thomàs Vives, and Johan Balaguer. When they discovered that these men and their families had already fled, they burned and looted their houses. The Unionists, however, did capture the ill don Olf de Pròixida and his son in their local town-house. Through these acts of terror the Unionists demonstrated to the citizens of Morvedre where their loyalties must lie, and, just in case they did not get the message, they took some of their children hostage. "Out of fear for their children or infants," the townspeople would have no choice but to "rebel . . . and disobey the said lord king and his officials."

After dealing with royalist and vacillating Christians, Unionist soldiers and their local supporters

went to the *jueria* . . . and here they murdered many Jewish males and females, both great and small, and from here they carried off all the clothing, jewelry, silver . . . and other things belonging to the said Jews . . . and they tore up all the letters of debt of the said Jews of the *jueria*.¹⁸

However, some Jewish families, like leading Christian royalists, had feared the Union's "invasion" of Morvedre and so had left town even before the Unionists' arrival.¹⁹

¹⁸ This account of the Union's attack on Morvedre and on its Jewish quarter is based primarily on the denunciations presented by the royal prosecutor, Guillem Canals, to King Pere in Sogorb on 21 November 1348, which are to be found in AMV: Llibres judiciales, Domingo Joan notary (1348): n.f. For a transcription and translation of the denunciations, see Meyerson, "Victims and Players." The treatment of the attack on the Jews in particular is based as well on ACA: C 655: 50v (10 November 1348) [partially transcribed in Meyerson, "Victims and Players"]; and C 654: 52v (22 November). See also the very brief accounts in J. Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. A. Canellas López, 9 vols. (Zaragoza, 1967–86), 4: 163; and Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 439.

¹⁹ ACA: C 887: 101r (18 November 1348): "Salamoni [Coffe], filio Alazarri,

The sacking of the *jueria* by the Unionists did not make complete economic sense. The *aljama*, after all, had been paying out pensions to various *censalistas* of Valencia, including Domingo d'Alguayre, a clothier and Union official.²⁰ Dispassionate cost-benefit analysis was not the order of the day, however, and the ready money to be gained from pillaging the Jews' homes was an obvious attraction. The mayhem also gave local Unionists or other Christians who had borrowed money from the Jews the opportunity to settle accounts with their creditors by destroying the credit instruments.²¹ All the rebels knew, moreover, that robbing the Jews and depriving them of future income was a sure way of doing some damage to the king.

Indeed, the attack of the Unionists on the Jews of Morvedre had more to do with politics than with economics. The Jews had always been the king's "treasure," and, as such, this kind of deliberate and organized violence against them—outside of Holy Week—had been almost unthinkable in normal political circumstances. However, in the polarized situation prevailing in 1348, when everyone had to decide whether they were for or against the king and his men, attacking Jews was a logical and acceptable action in the minds of those who had cast their lot with the Union. During the months of King Pere's stay in Morvedre, while local Christians were debating their allegiance to him, the Jews had demonstrated repeatedly, by appearing before the king to air their community and family problems, that he was their lord and they his faithful vassals.²² For some of the vac-

quondam fisici nostri, et Jafudano Cohen [or Coffe] et Isacho Elorqui [Alorqui], judeis habitatoribus dicte ville Muriveteris, qui cum eorum uxoribus et familiis metu invasionis, quam nuper nonnulli Valentini rebelles . . . perpetrarunt, compulsi se absentarunt ab eadem. . . ." Here King Pere was permitting these Jews either to return to Morvedre or to settle down elsewhere.

²⁰ Rodrigo, "Unión valenciana," 154, on Alguayre as one of the *conservadors* of the Union; and ACA: C 655: 182r (7 April 1349) for the *violari* owed by the *aljama* of Morvedre to his heirs.

²¹ The case of Domingo Senyellar (see chap. 4, n. 90) shows that there were some local Christians who had recently clashed with the Jews over credit issues. Still, it would be difficult to argue that hostility toward Jewish creditors was the main cause of the violence, since the large majority of the evidence on the lending and debt litigation of the Jews of Morvedre concerns peasant borrowers, individuals who took no part whatsoever in the Unionist violence.

²² In ACA: C 649–651 there are fifteen royal letters issued in Morvedre between 27 January and 26 March 1348 which respond specifically to the complaints of local Jews. Other documents show the king taking care of less contentious aspects of *aljama* business. E.g., on 20 February he licensed *aljama* officials to institute, for a five-year period, a series of excise taxes on the sale of victuals and other items.

illating Unionists of Morvedre shedding Jewish blood or robbing Jewish homes was a way of convincing themselves and the Union's soldiers from the capital of just where they stood. Participation in the sacking of the *jueria* was their pledge of allegiance to the Union.

The identification of the Jews of Morvedre with the royalist cause derived not only from their close relationship with the monarchy but also, and more persuasively, from their links to the town's prominent royalist families and the king's noble counselors possessing estates in the area. There was nothing at all fortuitous about the movement of the pillaging Unionists from the houses of families like the Vallebreras and the Pròixidas to the Jewish quarter.

In the minds of municipal officials at least, the knightly royalist families had acquired a privileged status frustratingly similar to that of the Jews. King Pere had exempted them and their peasant vassals residing on their lordships within the town *terme* from paying the property tax (*peita*), which was incumbent on all proprietors. Thus, like the Jews, they did not pay taxes along with the municipality despite their residence in Morvedre. Disputes over the *peita* between these royalist lords and the municipality exacerbated tensions caused by their interminable bickering over access to natural resources.²³

But the relationship between local knights and Jews extended beyond mere analogy to a real sharing of interests. Two lawyers of knightly status, Bonafonat de Vallebrera, the lord of Petrés, and Joan Munyós, the lord of Quart, were so trusted by the Jewish community that King Pere could appoint them in 1347 and 1348 to adjudicate lawsuits between Jews, including an inheritance dispute involving the Coffe family, and to oversee the fiscal affairs of the strife riven *aljama* with the counsel of two Jews.²⁴ And just as Vallebrera and Munyós were known figures in the *jueria*, the Jews were, as has been seen, frequent visitors to their estates and those of other royalist families within the *terme*. This set of relationships paralleled, on a reduced

Intended to aid the *aljama* in liquidating its debts and paying royal subsidies, it was to be administered by four leading Jewish taxpayers (ACA: C 886: 206r).

²³ Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 259; 2: 362–363, n. 3; and Meyerson, “Victims and Players.”

²⁴ ACA: C 650: 62r (19 December 1347); C 651: 122v–123r (18/19 February 1348); C 652: 76r–v (27 April), and 70v (6 May); and C 653: 78v (3 June). (See Meyerson, “Victims and Players,” for further discussion and transcriptions.) The charge laid against a local Jew for having slept with a wet-nurse in the employ of Thomàs Vives is indicative of the Jews' familiarity with the Vives family, another royalist family attacked by the Unionists (Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 340, n. 2).

geographic scale, the web of mutual interests tying the Jews of Morvedre to greater and more distant lords, like Olf de Pròixida, the seigneur of Almenara.²⁵

Little of this could have escaped Union partisans in Morvedre. The Jews' long-standing symbiosis with a number of seigneurs in the area, which had irritated some citizens of Morvedre when the municipality and the lords clashed, became a much greater provocation when the Union's revolt divided the town and much of the kingdom between urban citizenry and royalist seigneurs. In 1347–48, whether the Jews remained in the local *jueria* as royal vassals or moved to the estates of knights and nobles, they were inextricably tied to the royalist cause. The Jews' status as wards of the king could no longer deter hostile Christians when the king himself was the enemy.

On that November night the Jews were rather less fortunate than the royalist families whom the Unionists had aimed to murder. The Vallebreras and the Balaguers, for instance, escaped. One royalist knight who did fall under the swords of the Unionists was Guillem de Sant Feliu. A member of this family, Bonafonat, would later receive from the king the lordships of Beselga and Estivella, and, as bailiff of Morvedre, would be the protector of the Jews in 1391.²⁶

While the Jews of Morvedre were victimized by the forces of the Union, oddly enough the much larger and wealthier Jewish community in the capital, the headquarters of the Union, survived the rebellion unmolested. The difference in the respective fates of the two Jewish communities lay in the fact that although the Jews of Valencia were tied to the king's treasury and thus symbolically royalist, they were not in real terms allied with the king's main supporters.²⁷ Belonging to a community that was more urban in orientation

²⁵ See chap. 4 for the extensive moneylending of the Jews of Morvedre to the peasants of Almenara. ACA: C 1577: 32v–33r (2 February 1369) shows that Jews of Morvedre maintained a close relationship with the Pròixidas of Almenara and other regional lords in subsequent decades: “[Jews of Morvedre] habent in loco de Almanara [sic] et in aliis locis richorum hominum, nobilium, militum et aliorum dicti regni diversa debita, censualia, terras et alias possessiones.”

²⁶ Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 259, for Sant Feliu's death; Iborra, *Camp de Morvedre*, 221, regarding the family's acquisition of the lordships; and Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, chap. 1, for Bonafonat's actions in 1391.

²⁷ Although most Jews in the capital must have regarded themselves as vassals of the king, at least one Jew there—Abraham Coffe—openly sided with the Union and even fought in its army against royalist forces. ACA: C 887: 122r (16 January 1349): “Abrahe Coffen judei Valentie qui, ut dicitur, adversus nos una cum exercitu Valentie [i.e., the Unionist army] exeundo in campestri bello apud palçada. . . .”

and self-contained, the Jews of Valencia had not developed and did not depend on a symbiotic relationship with rural lords in the area. Moreover, royalist nobles had not, if they had any sense, remained in the capital to debate with the Unionists and thereby further polarize local politics. For the Jews of Morvedre, in contrast, the economic and sociopolitical bonds forged with the lords of the region over the course of decades had become fundamental to their way of life. The Jews of Morvedre really were allies of the regional powers most loyal to the king, and until 8 November the royalists stayed in Morvedre to contend with Unionist sympathizers and thus keep the question of the political allegiance of all the town's inhabitants, whether Christian or Jewish, very much alive.

The attack on Morvedre proved to be the last offensive action of the Union of Valencia. King Pere had already arrived in Sogorb, after formally dissolving the Aragonese Union in the Cortes of Zaragoza, and remained there until 28 November gathering forces and planning the final assault on the rebel capital. He then moved to Morvedre where he met no resistance, despite the recent intimidation of the Union and the opinions of its local partisans. The king's brief stay in Morvedre, until 4 December, must have been reassuring to the battered Jewish community.

After a hard fought battle, the city of Valencia capitulated to King Pere on 10 December. Rebel leaders were punished, some cruelly. At the Corts held between January and April 1349, Pere abolished the Union and annulled all concessions he had previously made to it. The king's victory over the Union, however, did not result in more authoritarian rule on his part. Instead, the kingdom saw a return to the traditional *pactista* form of government.²⁸

Once the king reestablished his authority in the kingdom, one of his most immediate concerns was to see to the indemnification of loyal subjects damaged during the rebellion.²⁹ The devastated Jews of Morvedre were high on the list, and even before the surrender

Abraham apparently died on the battlefield and left no heirs. Here King Pere is granting Abraham's property, up to a value of 2,000 sous b., to Maymon Andali, a Jew of Lleida, as recompense for his services to him.

²⁸ Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 439–449; Zurita, *Anales*, 4: 164–170; and Rubio, "Els temps difícils," 219–220.

²⁹ C. Sánchez-Cutillas Martínez de Del Romero, "Los damnificados de la guerra de la Unión (1345–48), y la función de un nuevo procurador de miserables," in *Primer Congreso de Historia del País Valenciano* (Valencia, 1980), 2: 605–618.

of Valencia, Pere, supremely confident that he would triumph over the Union, had set the gears of justice in motion.³⁰ The gears, however, turned more slowly than either the king or the Jews would have liked. Guillem Arnau, the lawyer assigned to determine the amount of reparations to be made to the Jews, did not issue a sentence until 17 January 1352. On the basis of the depositions of the aggrieved Jews and of other witnesses testifying on their behalf, he ruled that the Jews of Morvedre should be indemnified for 64,043 sous in damages. This quantity, divided up among Morvedre's Jewish families according to their losses, was to be collected from the punitive levies the king had imposed on the city and kingdom of Valencia.³¹ Although envoys from the capital complained to the king about the size of the awards granted to the Jews of Morvedre and to the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish inhabitants of royalist Xàtiva, the victims of the Union's depredations were duly compensated.³²

With the rebels crushed, the kingdom pacified, and the victims of the Union indemnified, things should have settled down in Morvedre; normality ought to have returned. Such, however, was not the case. During the months between January 1352 and February 1353 hostility against the Jews again welled up in Morvedre. "Some [Christians] of the said town," a Jewish nuncio told the king, "often injure these Jews or some of them, and they continually threaten to inflict worse on them." Because of this, the "naturally nervous" Jews "are immensely frightened . . . and do not dare to seek their goods or their debts or to proceed freely as they ought." The king directed local officials to

³⁰ Meyerson, "Victims and Players," for the details.

³¹ AMV: Lletres del Rey, 1348–1356, no. 2 (17 and 20 January 1352) [Chabret, *Sagunto*, 2: 429–433, no. 10]; and Sánchez-Cutillas, "Los damnificados," 607–609.

³² ACA: C 671: 126v–127r (4 June 1352) for the envoys' protests. I have not encountered any documents suggesting that the Jews of Morvedre did not receive the compensation awarded them in January 1352. Some of the indemnified Jews, however, did feel constrained by the condition King Pere attached to the compensation payment, namely, "quod nullus predictorum judeorum . . . alienaret et cederet id quod eisdem iudicatum foret alicui persone" (C: 895: 6v [5 June 1352]). Pere aimed to prevent the Jews from using the funds thus granted for liquidating debts to Christian creditors or for any purpose other than paying royal taxes. The guardians of the heirs of the deceased Isaac Atara therefore had to obtain special royal permission to use part of Isaac's compensation payment for the dowry of Isaac's now nubile daughter (C 895: 6v). Pere also allowed Salamó Coffe to use his 6,000-sous compensation "ad solvendum in christianis vel aliis quibuscumque personis." Since Salamó was exempted from royal taxes, by virtue of his father Alazar's medical services to the king, the latter had no misgivings about granting such permission (C 895: 131r–v [18 December 1352]).

protect the Jews and to make public proclamations forbidding injury to them.³³ With the memory of 8 November 1348 in the Jews' minds, the potential for the depopulation of the *jueria* was real.

The defunct Union had unfortunately stayed on the minds of all the inhabitants of Morvedre, and their brooding or gloating about the Union's fate created an ambience which fostered the grudges of "some" Christians against the Jews. The king's suppression of the Union had certainly not succeeded in healing a town rent by social and political faction. Indeed the post-Union settlement, in which some were indemnified or rewarded while others were punished, embittered many and kept the old enmities alive.

The Jews were not the only residents of Morvedre to receive reparations for property looted or destroyed by the Union. Royal magistrates awarded substantial sums to Bonafonat de Vallebrera, Bonafonat de Sant Feliu, and Thomàs Vives in 1352. The following year they were still considering the pleas of other citizens seeking compensation. Since a number of Morvedre's Unionist partisans had joined the host from the capital in plundering local royalists, the latter undoubtedly pointed their fingers at their former Unionist neighbors.

The royalists, who seem to have constituted a minority of the town's politically conscious population by the spring of 1348, needed to display their royalist credentials not only to recover stolen goods but also to avoid the punishment that King Pere inflicted on the entire town. The king penalized the municipality in 1349 with a fine of 70,000 sous b., a considerable sum for a town recovering from the effects of bubonic plague and the Union's attack. The townspeople were also subject to the levy imposed on much of the kingdom for the purpose of indemnifying the victims of the Union. In Morvedre and its *terme* the crown-appointed administrator of this levy was none other than that leading royalist and familiar of the Jews, Bonafonat de Vallebrera.

Faced with paying the heavy fine as well as ordinary taxes and mounting extraordinary subsidies, municipal officials grabbed revenue from whomever they could. But they met resistance. Vallebrera and other royalists of course refused to contribute to the 70,000-sous fine. Neither he nor Sant Feliu nor the other local knights cooperated in the payment of property taxes. Galceran de Bellpuig of

³³ ACA: C 676: 32r (6 February 1353) [transcribed in Meyerson, "Victims and Players"].

Torres-Torres cried foul when the *jurats* attempted to force his vassals possessing land in Morvedre's *terme* to pay a share of royal penalties. This was only one of several incidents which soon escalated to the point of bloody armed conflict between Morvedre and Torres-Torres.³⁴ Very little, then, had changed since the tumultuous days of the rebellion. If anything, feelings were harder than ever.

The individual Christians of Morvedre who threatened and otherwise molested the Jews must have been bitter former Unionists. While they paid the penalties for their rebellion or lukewarm support of the king they witnessed the Jews getting compensation. This, the awards granted to other royalists, and the new authority accorded Bonafonat de Vallebrera all rankled, but it was easier and safer to bully the Jews. Their harassment of the Jews logically took place during the months following Guillem Arnau's sentence, precisely when their sense of impotence before the triumphant monarchy and outrage at the apparent ascendancy of its Christian and Jewish allies peaked.

The malicious outbursts against the Jews of Morvedre in 1352 and early 1353 had little to do with the concerns expressed by three leading Jews—two Catalan and one Valencian—in the so-called "Accords of 1354." Among the problems these Jews raised, which they hoped that the king or pope would address, was the proclivity of Christians to blame the Jews for plagues, famines, and earthquakes and to urge violence against them.³⁵ Without advocating anti-Jewish violence, the bishop of Valencia, Hug de Fenollet, had in fact warned

³⁴ Meyerson, "Victims and Players."

³⁵ Rubio, "Els temps difícils," 230–231, cites the accords of 1354 in an effort to link the Black Death to increasing anti-Judaism in the kingdom. For the Hebrew version of the accords, see Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: 348–359; and for a Catalan translation see E. Feliu, "Els acords de Barcelona de 1354," *Calls*, 2 (1987), 145–164, appended to which (164–173) is the very useful commentary of J. Riera i Sans, "Guia per una lectura comprensiva dels acords." See also the discussion of Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, 239–240. The three Jews involved in establishing the accords were the Catalans Mossé Natan and Cresques Salamó, and the Valencian Jahudá Alatzar (on him, see J. Riera, "Jafudá Alatzar: jueu de València," *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 4 [1993], 65–100). The main success of their largely futile effort was a papal bull, dated 21 January 1356, admonishing Christians not to attack Jews on the erroneous grounds that the Jews' sins were the cause of epidemics and drought (S. Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See and the Jews*, 8 vols. [Toronto, 1988–91], 1: 405). ACA: C 695: 52r–53r (7 November 1358) is a letter addressed to Alatzar ordering him to collect from Valencian *aljamas* unspecified amounts intended to reimburse the heirs of the now deceased Cresques Salamó for the expenses their father had incurred on his mission to the pope in Avignon.

the *Consell* of Valencia in 1350 and 1351 that the sins Christians committed with Muslims and Jews might move an angry God to punish the kingdom with pestilence.³⁶ Yet even in 1348 Valencian Christians had not taken up arms against Jews for this reason. Furthermore, the next epidemic of plague did not hit the kingdom until 1362.³⁷ If local and regional politics lay at the root of the attack on Morvedre's *jueria* in November 1348, irrational fear and suspicion of the Jews would not likely have motivated Christians of Morvedre in a year when there was no plague at all. True, their resentment of the Jews was not entirely rational—the Unionists had indeed sacked the *jueria*—but it is, given the sociopolitical context, readily explicable.

Local officials apparently acted as King Pere had bade in February 1353 and the townspeople seem to have heeded their warnings, for there were no further appeals on the part of the Jews regarding widespread Christian abuse.³⁸ Once fines were paid and reparations made, and once the people of Morvedre did not have to be constantly reminded of who did what in 1348, time could heal at least some political wounds.

Jewish Rebellion

Some things time did not change. One of them was King Pere's need for revenue, whether for expeditions against the Genoese and the rebellious Sards or for the war with Castile, which began in the fall of 1356.³⁹ Table 6, based on the crown's fragmentary fiscal accounts, affords at least some idea of what he demanded of Valencian Jewry after the demise of the Union.

³⁶ Rubio, *Peste negra*, 97.

³⁷ Rubio, *Peste negra*, 29–33.

³⁸ Subsequent complaints of the Jews regarding the nastiness of Queen Leonor's tax collectors (ACA: C 674: 117r [28 June 1353]) or the burden of royal taxation (C 676: 128r–v [4 September 1353]) do not make any reference to the belligerence of local Christians.

³⁹ For the kingdom of Valencia's involvement in and contributions to King Pere's conflicts with the Genoese and the Sards, see Cabanes, "Valencia y Cerdeña," 135–136; Rubio, "Els temps difícils," 220–221; J.N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms, 1250–1516*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1976–78), 1: 366–368; and Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 454–491.

Table 6: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Pere III (1349–1359)

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1349				Stoppage of all procedure against Jews of Morvedre for outstanding debts (except annuities) ^a
1349		1,170 s.b.	Payment for wine purchased in 1348 for provisioning of royal fortress in Morvedre ^b	
1350	21,000 s.b.	5,000 s.b.	Defrayal of expenses from king's marriage to Elionor of Sicily ^c	Stay on exaction of <i>penes del quart</i> from Jewish debtors ^d Stay on collection of 5,000 s.b. subvention ^e
1352	1,050 s.b. (of 12,000 s.b. from all crown <i>aljamas</i>)	250 s.b.	For services of royal counselors, the Viscount of Canet and Jaspert de Tregurà, in <i>aljamas</i> ' negotiations with the crown over subsidies for war against Genoa and the Sards ^f	
1353	10,400 s.b. (of 14,000 s.b. sought)	Unspecified amount of 5,000 s.b. sought	For royal armada sent against the Genoese ^g	Remission to Morvedre of 400 s of 1350 subvention ^h
1354	20,000 s.b. (at least)	Unspecified amount (at least 5,000 s.b.)	Royal expedition to Sardinia ⁱ	
1355	12,000 s.b. (from all crown <i>aljamas</i>)	Unspecified	Annuity assigned to Prince Joan ^j	
1356	8,500 s.b. (from Jewish and Muslim <i>aljamas</i>)	Unspecified	Defense of Sardinia ^k	
1358				Promise to Jews of Morvedre of ten-year exemption from payment of all extraordinary subsidies ^l

^a ACA: C 654: 5r (31 January 1349).

^b ACA: C 655: 142r (10 March 1349). The *aljama* had purchased the wine from Francesc Soler, although now it had to reimburse Jaume de Manresa, another resident of Morvedre to whom Soler had ceded the credit. C 655: 194v (29 April) is the complaint of Manresa that the justice of Morvedre still had not taken action against the *aljama*.

^c ACA: C 1472: 67v (1 December 1349).

^d ACA: C 664: 133v (15 June 1351).

^e ACA: C 664: 145v (12 July 1351). Here Pere noted the “inopia et paupertate ad quam aljama judeorum ville Muriveteris, ut asseritur, multipliciter est deducta.”

^f ACA: C 671: 58r (10 March 1352); and C 674: 10v–11r (25 November 1352). Although these are small sums, they were in addition to an array of ordinary and extraordinary taxes. Unfortunately, the *maestre racional* registers for the 1345–53 period are fragmentary and yield almost no information on the taxes rendered by Valencian Jews.

^g ACA: MR 334: 22v (June 1353).

^h ACA: C 1473: 146v (11 June 1353).

ⁱ ACA: MR 336: 10v–11r (February/March 1354). The *aljama* of Valencia provided 14,000 sous b., and those of Xàtiva and Alzira 4,000 sous b. and 2,000 sous b., respectively. The record is strangely silent regarding Morvedre, but given what the *aljama* was asked to pay in 1353 (see n. g), its contribution must have been at least 5,000 sous b.

^j ACA: C 772: 77v–78r (30 June 1374) refers to a notarial instrument dated 22 June 1355 recording the original assignment to the prince of the 12,000 sous “super omnibus aliis judeorum jurisdictionis nostre.”

^k ACA: MR 338: 18v–19r (April 1356).

^l ACA: C 697: 114r–115r.

The other constant was the Jews' efforts to avoid giving the king as much as he wanted. King Pere and the Jews of Morvedre had in fact picked up with their game of cat and mouse just as soon as the Unionists were subdued.

Prior to their indemnification, the inhabitants of the plundered *jueria* were in no shape to render taxes. Pere tried to assist them by staying for one year the collection of all debts they owed to Christian creditors.⁴⁰ This blanket moratorium turned out to be rather ragged, since it did not cover the pensions the *aljama* was obliged to pay to *censalistas*.⁴¹ In 1349–50 Jews responded to pressure from their creditors and to the king's request for new subsidies by flying to other towns and to seigneurial lands, including Vila-real and the Vall d'Uixó, then the possessions of the princesses Constança and Johanna.⁴² The threats of their triumphant king brought some of the evasive Jews back to Morvedre, but not all of them.⁴³ Pere thus

⁴⁰ ACA: C 654: 5r (31 January 1349). Pere pointed out that he granted the moratorium lest the *aljama* sink under its "immense burden of debt." He conceded a similar *elongamentum* to the *aljama* of Xàtiva, hit hard by the Black Death (C 654: 9v [11 March 1349]). The king also assisted Morvedre's "disraubata et destructa" *aljama* by giving it 2,000 of the 6,000 sous b. it owed his stepmother, Queen Leonor. The 2,000 sous was to come from fines collected by the *quartoners* of Valencia and Morvedre—fitting since at least some of the fines would have been paid by individuals indebted to Jews (ACA: C 1317: 138v–139r [1 February 1350, referring to a measure taken "anno transacto"]). Individual Jews received help as well. Jucef Ballester and other Jews of Morvedre got a two-year extension on the payment of a debt of 140 sous (C 654: 2r [8 December 1348]).

⁴¹ ACA: C 655: 166v–167r (28 March 1349); C 657: 11v–112r (11 August 1349); and C 656: 163r (September 1349) concern the payment of such debts. Even the pensions owed to the heirs of a former Union official, Domingo d'Alguayre, had to be paid (C 655: 182r [7 April 1349]). Of course, the array of internal *cises aljama* officials were empowered to institute and farm out enabled them to gather the funds required to pay such annuities. King Pere had licensed the *aljama* to levy *cises* in February 1348 for a five-year period (C 886: 206r), and did so again on 14 July 1351, this time for a two-year period (C 894: 25r).

⁴² ACA: C 658: 102v (3 February 1350) is Pere's order to the bailiff of Morvedre to proclaim that all Jews "accustomed to reside" in Morvedre must return there within thirty days or suffer monetary or corporal penalties: "faciatis publice nunciari quod judei universi . . . in dicta villa hactenus soliti residere intra tringinta dies a die preconitationis . . . ad villam eandem suum domicilium reducant et peytam solitam solvant ibidem sicut antea . . . sub pena corporum et bonorum." Compare this with his reliance on *aljama* officials in earlier years (see chap. 3).

⁴³ One of the returnees was Jahudà Coffe. He had sustained great losses when the Union sacked the *jueria* and had moved to Vila-real. He was concerned that the bailiff of Vila-real would still try to tax him after his return to Morvedre. ACA: C 659: 131r–v (10 February 1350): "Supplicem petitionem Jafudani Coffe, judei olim habitatoris ville Muriveteris, nunc vero vicinus Ville Regalis, suscepimus con-

issued more menacing orders in 1351, though he sweetened them with new moratoria.⁴⁴

These measures did not have the desired effect. Even the damages awarded the Jews in January 1352 did little to change their outlook or to immobilize them.⁴⁵ In September Pere therefore commanded the bailiff of Morvedre to proclaim "in the accustomed places" that every Jew of Morvedre who had in the last four years "transferred his domicile" to "towns or villages of princes, nobles, knights, and clergy" return to Morvedre within four months or suffer certain unspecified penalties.⁴⁶ A familiar combination of problems—in addition to the uncomfortable political situation in Morvedre—

tinentem quod ipse Jaffudanus, occasione invasionis et depredationis in juderia dicte ville Muriveteris . . . per homines ipsius Unionis perpetrare, in quem invasionem idem Jaffudanus extitit, ut asseritur, disraubatus, et etiam propter maxima onera debitorum, tributorum, subsidiorum, demandatum et aliarum exactionum regalium et vicinalium que et quas judei dicte ville exsolvere tenebantur, suum ad dictum locum Ville Regalis transtulit domicilium. . . ."

⁴⁴ ACA: C 664: 135v (15 June 1351), and 171v (beginning), 161r (19 August 1351). Some of the Jews who had moved to Vila-real and the Vall d'Uixó actually protested that obeying the king's orders might cause them "to be unduly oppressed or vexed by labors or expenses." Their residence on the domains of the princesses explains their cheekiness. Pere sent the bailiff of Morvedre to treat with them. For the moratoria, see Table 6.

⁴⁵ Hence in June 1352 the *aljama* of Morvedre sought legal action against members "staying in the Vall d'Uixó." ACA: C 671: 139v (16 June 1352): "Cum in omni processu, executione et enantamento per vos [royal officials] vel alium aut alios vestrum factis vel fiendis adversus judeos comorantes in vall Uxonis ad instantiam aliame judeorum dicte ville Muriveteris ratione peytarum vel impositionum ad quarum contributionem dicta aliama judeorum asserit . . . dictos judeos vallis predictae teneri, donec nos in civitate Valencie personaliter constituti fuerimus supersederi ex causa providerimus et velimus. . . ." Pere's decision is unknown. It is in any case interesting that in a letter of 23 April 1352 to his procurator in the kingdom, Garcia de Loric, he argued in favor of the jurisdiction of the bailiff general and local bailiffs over "Muslims or Jews of a place belonging to a noble, or knight, or whatever other private person" who commit crimes within the district of a royal town. (This letter is contained in a much later royal letter [15 April 1447] concerning the bailiffs' jurisdiction—ARV: B 1150: 80r–83v [Hinojosa, *Jews*, no. 487].) During the thirteenth century and the earlier decades of the fourteenth century Jews would not have been mentioned in such a context. By the 1350s it was clear to the king that, like it or not, there were Jews living on the estates of nobles and knights and not just in royal towns.

⁴⁶ ACA: C 895: 64v–65r (12 September 1352): ". . . intendentes quoscumque judeos quos a quatuor annis citra inveneritis eorum domicilia transmutasse in villis seu locis infantium, nobilium, militum aut personarum ecclesiasticarum ad transtulendum sive reducendum eorum domicilia et habitaciones in dicta villa Muriveteris per modum inferius declaratum cum presenti providimus compellendos. Eapropter vobis dicimus et expresse mandamus quatenus visis presentibus per loca assueta dicte ville in quibus preconizationes fieri sunt consuete sequentem preconizationem. . . ."

gave the Jews itchy feet. While they were being hounded by creditors and royal tax collectors the Jews often found it impossible to collect debts from Christian borrowers who were themselves, in various ways, serving King Pere in his war against Genoa.⁴⁷ At the same time, increased royal taxation intensified conflict within the Jewish community over fiscal issues. Jacob Ategir, for example, threatened to “desert the said town to live in other kingdoms” if *aljama* officials forced him to cough up money he alleged he did not have.⁴⁸ The king did not dismiss such threats—and they were many—as mere hyperbole.⁴⁹ Hence he tried to counterbalance the probable departure of some Jewish families with measures to attract others. He empowered *aljama* officials to persuade potential immigrants to transfer their residence to Morvedre’s Jewish quarter by negotiating special fiscal arrangements with them.⁵⁰

Any immigrants would have had to come from other Jewish communities whose officials also dangled tax breaks to lure new mem-

⁴⁷ ACA: C 674: 204v (30 April 1353) concerns the complaint of the Jews that they could not satisfy their own creditors because many persons indebted to them were refusing to repay them “on the pretext of the armada of galleys” being outfitted for service against the Genoese. Like other towns in the kingdom, Morvedre was also called on to provide “ajuda en la armada que fem de present contra los Genoveses per raho de la guerra que havem ab ells per Cerdunya e Corcega” (C 678: 182v–183r [28 January 1353]). The first sales of *censals* by Valencian municipalities not surprisingly date from the 1350s—see Sánchez, “Evolución,” 415–418; and Furió, “Crédito y endeudamiento.”

⁴⁸ ACA: C 676: 128r–v (4 September 1353): “idem Jacob devenit ad maximam suorum bonorum egetitiam sic quod si taxationes dictarum peytarum et aliarum exaccionum regalium que sunt facte haberent transire, idem Jacob non posset solvere suam partem ipsum solvere contingentem; imo coactus haberet deserere dictam villam ad habitandum ad alia regna. . . .” C 674: 167v (November/December) concerns the problem of Jews of Alzira changing residence to escape royal taxation.

⁴⁹ Mossé Bites, for example, had returned to Morvedre from Valencia in obedience to one of the king’s orders, but he was again complaining that he could not get any justice from *aljama* officials (ACA: C 674: 43r–v [2 January 1353]). C 707: 175r (9 April 1362), and 187r–v (11 April) show that Mossé would again abandon Morvedre for Valencia on account of fiscal pressures. C 674: 204v (30 April 1353) indicates that many other Jews of Morvedre were threatening flight due to the burden of debt they carried: “formidant quod si dicta debita haberent nunc exsolvere . . . ad alia regna . . . eorum domicilia transferre.” Apparently the renewal of the *aljama*’s license to levy sales-taxes (C 895: 196r [7 March 1353]), even if it helped *aljama* officials to handle communal debts, only aggravated individual taxpayers.

⁵⁰ ACA: C 1473: 146v (11 June 1353). Three local Jews were to work together with the royal bailiff in hammering out “compositiones et avinentias” with the immigrants, who might come to Morvedre from royal or seigneurial domains. Pere also granted Morvedre’s Jews a one-year moratorium on debt payment, excluding the annuities they owed to widows and minors (C 674: 204v).

bers. Not surprisingly, over the course of the next several years all the Valencian *aljamas* were complaining about the same problem: the frequent migration of community members exhausted by taxation and harried by creditors.⁵¹ Given the demographic and budgetary deficits of many towns and villages, these Jews could always find some place to go.

The Jews of Morvedre were able to persist in their evasive strategies because their alliances with the knights and nobles of the area had held firm. In January 1358 King Pere learned from *aljama* officials that some Jews, in order to avoid taxation, “make themselves residents of some places of nobles, knights, and *generosi* located near the said town.” What most annoyed the officials was the fact that these same Jews were nonetheless spending most of their time in their homes in the *jueria*. Pere devised a sensible solution to the problem: every Jew who resided in his or her domicile within Morvedre and its *terme* for thirty days in a given year was obliged to pay taxes for that year as if he or she had been living in Morvedre continually, and this notwithstanding their status as “resident” elsewhere. Having fiscal responsibility hinge on thirty days of residence anywhere in the *terme* of Morvedre, and not just in the town itself, was a particularly shrewd measure. It prevented Jews from using the small lordships in the *terme* as temporary refuges from royal taxation.⁵²

Later that month Pere confirmed and approved of all royal privileges previously conceded to the *aljama* as well as all communal

⁵¹ There were only twelve Jews living in Xàtiva, for example, by November 1357 (ACA: C 689: 95r). In 1359 Jews of this, now larger, community complained of their many expenses, including those incurred “pro guerra Castelle,” and expressed a desire to move elsewhere (C 697: 120v–121r, perhaps to Alcoi (C 1570: 141v [27 October 1361])). The *aljama* of Alzira also had to work to bring members back to town (C 674: 167v [December 1353] and C 699: 230r–v [24 April 1360]). The *aljama* of Valencia was beset by similar problems (C 697: 117v [20 September 1359]; C 700: 22v–23r [8 October] and 74v–75r [30 November]), but its size and wealth made them easier to handle. The Valencian financier Jahudà Alatzar was so wealthy that he and his relations in 1363 paid as much in extraordinary subsidies as several Jewish and Muslim *aljamas* combined (Riera, “Jafudà Alatzar,” 76).

⁵² ACA: C 694: 9v (10 January 1358): “Quod aliqui judei, singulares de eadem [*aljama* of Morvedre], in derogationem iurum nostrorum et peyte dicte aljame detrimentum, ad hoc, ut a solutione ipsius excusentur, non mutatis eorum domiciliis vicinos se faciunt aliquorum locorum nobilium et militum ac generosum circumcirca dictam villam situatorum, in quibus locis non tenent neque foveant ipsorum domicilia per tam longam anni partem qui ad modum faciunt in villa supradicta, ob quod sindici ipsius aljame, nunc in curia nostra presentes, nobis humiliter supplicarunt ut super eisdem congruum remedium impartiri dignaremur.” C 694: 17r

ordinances “made or to be made” by the *aljama*. He highlighted the communal ordinances concerned with taxation.⁵³ The king, in other words, was affirming or even widening the authority of *aljama* officials to do what was necessary to secure fiscal revenue. The intentions of communal officials in this regard made at least one resident of the *jueria* nervous. Meora Avinaçara, whom the officials had attracted to Morvedre with a promised exemption from payment of the *violaris* for which the *aljama* was liable, began to doubt whether they would adhere to their promise.⁵⁴

Meora did not wait around very long in Morvedre to find out, nor did any other Jew. Even though the steps King Pere had taken in January seemed reasonable, they were in fact a gross miscalculation. In a letter of 21 February the king made a startling admission: “because of the immoderate sums of money that we ordered exacted and taken from it [the *aljama*], and sometimes not without the fault and negligence of our officials, [the] *aljama* [that is, the *jueria*] stands depopulated and uninhabited not just partly but completely.”⁵⁵ The vacant *jueria* was proof positive of just how unbearable the weight of royal taxation had become. In all its emptiness the *jueria* echoed with Jewish protest. There were limits, the Jews declared in their sudden flight, to what they could endure.⁵⁶ They did not have to

(same date) is basically a reiteration of 9v. C 693: 96r–v (26–27 January 1358) concerns a lawsuit pitting Andreu Olreu, a notary of Valencia, against various members of the *aljama* of Morvedre. When Jucef Cortovi of Morvedre needed to raise funds to pay taxes, he sold Olreu his rights to certain debts owed him by local Jews. Olreu, however, could not collect from the Jews, “propter eorum recessum a dicto loco [Morvedre].” Olreu then sued the *aljama* itself, which complained that the governor, the presiding magistrate, could not efficiently administer justice because “per diversa loca habet discurrere cotidie et frequenter.” The flight of Jews outside of Morvedre was hampering the governor.

⁵³ ACA: C 693: 96v–97r (26 January 1358).

⁵⁴ ACA: C 693: 93v (25 January 1358).

⁵⁵ ACA: C 900: 36v–37r (recounted in C 697: 114r–115r [18 September 1359]): “Quod in dicta villa Muriveteris sic prout consuevit ab antiquo *aljama* judeorum sicut in aliis villis insignibus dicti Regni Valencie existit, quequidem *aljama* tam propter inmoderatas exactiones peccunie quas ab ea exigi fecimus et haberi quam alias non absque nostrorum officialium culpa et negligencia depopulata existit et inhabita nedum in parte sed in toto et quod iterum populetur de novo. . . .” Using the language of Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 19, one could say that at this point the Jews of Morvedre were making public their “hidden transcript” of discontent and evasiveness.

⁵⁶ Obviously, the renewal of *aljama* sales-taxes had not persuaded the Jews not “*larios proprios dimittere*” (ACA: C 901: 223v–224r [12 November 1357]). However much the *cises* assisted communal officials, they would only have overwhelmed tax-

remain tied to the *jueria* as serfs of the royal treasury because they had other places to go—the lands of the nobles and knights who welcomed their services. Although the Jews' mass abandonment of Morvedre was somewhat desperate, it was also a remarkably bold and calculated act which their strong ties to influential Christian families in the region made possible. They gambled on the probability that their king, his hands full with Pedro I of Castile, would not send his officials to hunt them down and in the process antagonize his own powerful friends. The gamble paid off.

Instead of brandishing sticks, King Pere now offered carrots so that the *jueria* "might be populated again." He instructed Berenguer de Codinachs, his fiscal auditor, and the lawyer Arnau Joan to draw Jews from seigniorial lands and other towns to Morvedre with the promise of a ten-year exemption from the payment of all extraordinary subsidies.⁵⁷ Bonafonat de Sant Feliu, the bailiff of Morvedre, was assigned the task of concluding agreements with Jews coming to settle in the *jueria* regarding the amount of ordinary taxes for which they would be liable. The Jews could not be compelled to yield anything beyond what they and the bailiff agreed on.⁵⁸ Finally, the king gave the Jews some relief from outstanding *violari* payments.⁵⁹

payers at this point. Likewise, the issuance of a general pardon to Morvedre's Jews—meant to obviate any expenses stemming from lawsuits—had not had the intended effect (C 901: 224r-v [9 January 1358]). It had been too little too late.

⁵⁷ ACA: C 697: 114r-115r.

⁵⁸ ACA: C 698: 35v-36r (13 May 1359), which refers to the king's instructions to Sant Feliu the previous year: "Quod licet nos pro reparando de novo juderiam dicte ville que pluribus de causis destructa erat, Bonafonato de Sancto Feliu, militi baiulo eiusdem ville, comissionem fecerimus inter alia continentem, quod cum quibusvis judeis ad populandum seu habitandum de novo in dicta judaria venire volentibus ipse baiulus convenire posset super solutione quacumque per eos fienda et exactione ab ipsis habenda, sic quod aliquid aliud exsolvendum ultra id pro quo cum eisdem idem baiulus conveniret ipsi judei minime tenerentur, ut hec et alia in carta nostra inde facta latius dicuntur enarrari, cuius pretexto judei qui nunc in dicta judaria sunt amodico citra tempore in eadem populati existunt." ACA: C 1169: 54r (11 June 1359), and C 699: 53r (23 November 1359) show that at least part of the ordinary tax load was the *peita* of 2,000 sous the *aljama* paid annually, first to Queen Leonor, Pere's stepmother, and then, after her death, to Pere's wife Queen Elionor.

⁵⁹ ACA: C 903: 278v-279r (1 April 1360) (also C 710: 60r-v [14 March 1362]). Here King Pere refers to a royal letter issued on 20 February 1358 "pro reparatione et restauratione dicte aljame," in which he ordered that the *aljama* be released from the obligation to pay the heirs of Martí Março money it owed them from past *violari* payments and the interest thereon, and be compelled to pay only the 4,000 sous for which it had originally sold the *violari* to Março as well as a maximum interest of 300 sous.

These measures, all of which Pere had decided on at the end of February, had the desired effect. By the following year the *jueria* was full of life.⁶⁰

Municipal and royal officials, however, threatened to undo what had just been achieved. In the spring of 1359 the local administrators of the taxes levied on the sale of foodstuffs compelled the Jews to pay taxes on purchases of *kasher* meat and wine. This was unprecedented, inasmuch as the *aljama* had long had its own array of sales-taxes for specifically Jewish transactions. King Pere put a stop to this activity.⁶¹

Surprisingly, Pere also had to rein in Codinachs and Joan, the very officials who had been instrumental in the repopulation of the *jueria*. They seem to have been under the impression that the ten-year exemption from extraordinary subsidies they had been instructed to offer the Jews was only a ruse designed to lure them back to Morvedre. Hence in September 1359 they demanded from the Jews a subsidy in the king's name. They quickly discovered, however, that the king had not intended to deceive the Jews. He forced them to return the money.⁶² Other officials, whose collection of debts from Jews on behalf of the *aljama*'s creditors was again forcing Jews to desert the Jewish quarter, had to be reminded the following year to respect the fiscal arrangements the bailiff, Sant Feliu, had worked out with the Jews.⁶³

Experience had taught King Pere that this was not a Jewish community easily toyed with. To keep the Jews in Morvedre, relatively content, and paying some—and hopefully more—taxes, one had to handle them carefully.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, Pere was not to enjoy the

⁶⁰ ACA: C 698: 35v–36r. See n. 58 for the partial transcription, from which it is clear that by May 1359 a number of Jews had returned to Morvedre.

⁶¹ ACA: C 698: 35v–36r. It was these fiscal initiatives that prompted Pere to remind local officials of his instructions to Bonafonat de Sant Feliu the previous year (see n. 58). The municipal government had a history of exacting taxes from whomever it could, even the local Franciscan convent (C 676: 161v [1 December 1353]).

⁶² ACA: C 697: 114r–115r (18 September 1359).

⁶³ ACA: C 704: 145v–146v (19 November 1360). King Pere expressed the particular concern that if some Jews abandoned the Jewish quarter the remaining Jewish families would only be harder pressed. Pere also encouraged the *aljama*'s creditors, like Gil Roderic, *domicellus* of Valencia, who sought “pensionibus violarii” from the *aljama*, to reach a settlement with *aljama* officials, one that would work “pro restauratione aljame” (C 904: 214v [6 November 1360]).

⁶⁴ Pere certainly had plans for the Jews of Morvedre. In November 1360 he licensed *aljama* officials to institute excise taxes for the express purpose of a “sub-

fruits of his hard earned wisdom. Castilian troops soon captured Morvedre, and their treatment of its inhabitants, Jewish and Christian, was anything but careful.

Castilian Occupation and Reconstruction

The kingdom of Valencia was the principal theater of King Pere's decade-long war with Pedro I, the Cruel, of Castile. Castile's claim to Valencian territory was in fact one of the main causes of the war. Castilian monarchs had never fully accepted Jaume II's annexation of a large part of the kingdom of Murcia to the kingdom of Valencia in 1304–5. Moreover, King Pere's troublesome stepbrothers, Ferran and Joan, then refugees in the Castilian court, still retained possessions in the kingdom's disputed southern region.

By the 1350s the Crown of Aragon was no match for the much larger and wealthier Castile. Hence King Pere had to fight, and very nearly lost, a defensive war. Only civil war in Castile, and the intervention of mercenary armies there on the side of the rebel and eventual usurper Enrique de Trastámara, prevented Pedro I from dismembering the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia.

During the first phase of the war, between September 1356 and May 1361, the southern region of the kingdom of Valencia and the kingdom of Aragon bore the brunt of the Castilian offensive. The war's second phase, which extended from June 1362 until Castilian withdrawal from Valencian territory in 1366, affected the central part of the Valencian kingdom as well. It left much of the kingdom devastated.

After capturing Calatayud, Tarazona, and Teruel in Aragon, King Pedro's armies swept into Valencian territory in the early months of 1363. A number of towns, including Morvedre, Sogorb, and Xèrica, rapidly submitted to the Castilians. Pedro made strategic Morvedre the center of his military operations. From there he took other important points and besieged Valencia twice, in the springs of 1363 and 1364. Each time the arrival of a relief force under King Pere obliged

sidium guerre vigentis inter nos et Regem Castelle" (ACA: C 904: 234v). It is not known if Pere actually collected such a subsidy. If so, he would have contravened the ten-year exemption from extraordinary taxation he had granted the community in 1358 (see Table 6).

the Castilian to retreat to Morvedre. In June 1364 Pedro himself departed Morvedre and left the town under the command of Gómez Pérez de Porras, prior of the Order of San Juan.⁶⁵

King Pere regarded Morvedre's surrender to the Castilian monarch as an act of treason.⁶⁶ Memories of the Unionist leanings of the townspeople and of his own ill treatment at their hands naturally led Pere, who had something of a vindictive streak, to see things in this way. He was not completely off the mark. Even if they did not welcome the Castilian king with open arms, people in Morvedre still smarting from the post-Union settlement and further irritated by incessant taxation were not likely to have put up much of a fight.⁶⁷ Indeed, Pedro captured Morvedre through negotiation. Once he established himself there, some local officials cooperated all too willingly with him.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 492–584; Pero López de Ayala, *Coronica del rey don Pedro*, ed. C. Wilkins and H. Wilkins (Madison, 1985), 136–147, on the second phase of the war; and Zurita, *Anales*, 4: 460–536. Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 261–278; and Rubio, “Els temps difícils,” 221–226, for Valencian perspectives on the war. C. Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350–1369* (Leiden, 1995), 180–224, is a recent English account. See also S. Romeu Alfaro, “Cortes en ‘lo setge de Murvedre’ de 1365,” in *Primer Congreso de Historia del País Valenciano*, 3 vols. (Valencia, 1980), 2: 619–624.

⁶⁶ Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 570–571, n. 160; and, e.g., ACA: C 1571: 162v–163r (11 September 1363), in which Queen Elionor relates that in a letter issued on 1 September King Pere “haia donats e atorgats a nos tots e sengles bens mobles e seents e simovents que fossen o sien de quals sevol habitants de les ciutats de Taraçona e de Terol e de les viles de Calatayud, de Murvedre e de Liria e del loch del Puig de Valencia . . . qui, oblidats la naturalesa a que son tenguts al senyor Rey, se son sotsmeses al Rey de Castella, enemich del senyor Rey e nostre.”

⁶⁷ ACA: C 1571: 32r (15 July 1362) shows that some families had been leaving Morvedre and other royal towns to avoid paying taxes to the crown. Romeu, “Cortes en ‘lo setge de Murvedre’,” 620, points out that in the general Cortes of Monzón of 1362, the kingdom of Valencia granted Pere a subvention of 1,060,000 sous. It did not help that the kingdom was then reeling from the most recent outbreak of bubonic plague (Rubio, *Peste negra*, 29–33.)

⁶⁸ López de Ayala, *Coronica*, 136: “E dende fue a la villa de Monuiedro, e touola çercada algunos dias, cobrola por pleytesia.” ACA: C 1713: 158r–v (20 April 1371), regarding the complaint of Thomàs Robau “quod ipso tempore guerre Castelle comorante in dicta villa Muriveteris, manutenente dictum dominum Regem [Pere] et nos [Prince Joan], fuit accusatus et denunciatus coram Petro quondam Rege Castelle, et ipsi Regi per juratos et rectores tunc temporis dicte ville traditus cum aliis dicte ville per modum de refena [hostage] et sic in civitate Sibilie [Seville] cum cathena per collum per duos annos captus extitit.” The collaboration of local officials is clear here. Robau was seeking reparations from the municipality of Morvedre. See also Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 281–283, who is naturally a bit apologetic with regard to the surrender of the people of Morvedre and their possible collaboration with the Castilians.

Yet others in Morvedre were more inclined to fight or at least disdained collaboration with the Castilian enemy. The staunchest opponents of the Castilians came from the same families who had been unwaveringly royalist during the revolt of the Union. They must have fled town once the Castilians moved in.⁶⁹ Those who stayed in Morvedre discovered that opposition to the Castilians could be dangerous, even fatal. One unfortunate loyal subject, the apothecary Francesc Rosano, had his hands and feet cut off by order of the Castilian commander.⁷⁰ Others were seized and sent off to Castile as slaves or hostages.⁷¹

As for Morvedre's Jews, given their traditional dependence on the ruling house of the Crown of Aragon and their ties to the local Christian families who were most loyal to it, they would not have willingly abandoned King Pere for King Pedro. The Jews did not know what to expect from the Castilian monarch, whereas they knew King Pere quite well—so well that they could almost anticipate his response to their fiscal maneuvers and complaints. In any case, they were in no position militarily to resist the Castilians. Unlike the

⁶⁹ ACA: C 737: 22r-v (20 June 1367) is a letter addressed to the municipal officials of Morvedre concerning the complaint of members of the Vallebrera, Munyós, Vives, Sant Feliu, Maçana, and Joan families that although "durante guerra Castelle . . . semper vixerint in servicio ac sub obediencia nostri ac pro honore et defensione corone nostre et rei publice Regnorum et terrarum nostrorum sicut fideles vassalli suo naturali domino exposuerint se et sua," the municipal officials "tamen affecti ad proprium commodum et ad premissa respectum debitum non habentes sed punicionis quam vobis infligimus, quia Regis Castelle hostis nostri servicio adhesistis, prenomatos servitores nostros . . . compulistis seu compellere conamini ad contribuendum vobiscum in operibus castri dicte ville." Pere of course ruled that his loyal *militēs* and *domicelli* should not have to contribute to the castle repairs. Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 283, n. 1, citing ACA: C 921: 26r, points out that in December 1369 King Pere indemnified Bonafonat de Sant Feliu with 5,000 sous from the assets confiscated from those in Morvedre who had sided with the Castilians.

⁷⁰ ACA: C 1077: 22v-23r (21 May 1366): "Franciscus Rosano, apothecarius quondam dicte ville vicinus, quamquam sub dicti Regis [of Castile] obediencia existeret, agnoscendo fidelitatem et naturalitatem nostram tractabat pro viribus ut villa eadem ad nostrum reduceretur dominium Castellanis abinde repulsis, cuius tractatus occasione prior sancti Johannis, qui tunc pro dicto Rege Castelle dictam villam tenebat, amputando dicto Francisco Rosano pedes et manus eundem ultimo suplico crudelissime condemnavit." This took place after King Pedro's departure in June 1364. Pere safeguarded the inheritances of Rosano's widow and children.

⁷¹ ACA: C 1614: 109r-v (9 March 1367) concerns the seventy people of Morvedre, "subditi domini Regis [Pere]," whom the Castilians captured and carried off to Castile. C 726: 109v (8 July 1366) refers to "alcuns de la vila de Murvedre qui eren per reenes [hostages] o en altra manera en Castella." See also the case treated in n. 68.

Muslims of the region, whose demographic weight and military potential enabled them to defect to the Castilians and then advantageously negotiate a return to King Pere, the Jews had little bargaining power in time of war.⁷² They had to accept whatever deal the municipality cut with the Castilians.

The Jews did not suffer at the hands of the Castilian occupiers treatment any worse than that inflicted on local Christians loyal to King Pere. Jews and Christians both lost various deeds and legal instruments in the course of the Castilian invasion. The foundation charter of the local synagogue was destroyed.⁷³ The Castilians also took some Jews captive and shipped them off, along with Christian prisoners, to Cartagena in Murcia.⁷⁴ No Jew seems to have met the horrible fate of Francesc Rosano.⁷⁵

King Pere was not able to initiate efforts to recover the crucial Palancia valley—and Morvedre—until the winter of 1365. In March he besieged Morvedre and took steps to ensure that more victuals did not reach the Castilian garrison.⁷⁶ The Castilians, who were even-

⁷² On the conduct of the Muslims during the war, see Boswell, *Royal Treasure*, 385–400; and the documents in Ferrer, *Frontera amb l'Islam*, 312–325. A number of the Muslim communities concerned were located in the region between the Turia and Millars rivers.

⁷³ Archivo Diocesano de Valencia: Sección I. Fondo II. Visitas pastorales. Caja 132: 9v (4 March 1383) [transcribed in *Visitas pastorales*, 468–469, no. 104]. See also J. Hinojosa Montalvo, “Sinagogas valencianas (1383–1492),” *Sefarad*, 38 (1978), 299–300.

⁷⁴ ACA: C 1615: 78v–79r (4 March 1367) concerns the plea of Joan Cavaller, broker of Valencia, whom Arnau Joan, the lieutenant governor, “ordinavit et elegit . . . in exam ad redimendum a posse et manibus castellanorum, tunc inimicorum dicti domini Regis, aliquos christianos et judeos dicti domini Regis subditos et vassallos, qui in posse inimicorum predictorum capti detinebantur in Cartagenie civitate.” Considering that the Castilians controlled Morvedre and arrested and conveyed to Castilian territory at least seventy of its Christian inhabitants, some of the Christians and Jews whom Cavaller was commissioned to redeem must have been from Morvedre.

⁷⁵ Salamó Asseyo was killed “per quosdam malefactores in itinere publice,” but the murder seems to have occurred in the fall of 1362, that is, just before the Castilian invasion of the Palancia valley. See ACA: C 1616: 6v–7r (29 November 1367), where the Jewish plaintiffs seeking his inheritance note that “quinque anni sunt elapsi” since the murder.

⁷⁶ ACA: C 1210: 59r–v (25 March 1365), which is addressed to municipal officials in Palma de Mallorca, notes “la gran fretura que ha en aquest Regne de Valencia de viandes,” and asks them to have ships with grain sent to Valencia and Borriana. Pere points out that without these provisions his own troops will not be able to continue their efforts to wrest Morvedre and other towns from the Castilians. ACA: C 1211: 22r (19 March 1365) and C 1210: 61r (11 April) are Pere’s letters to officials ordering them to prevent all supplies of food from reaching Morvedre.

tually reduced to eating horses and mules for lack of bread, decided therefore to remove from Morvedre all who had displayed an unwillingness to defend the town against King Pere. Sometime before 20 March they expelled "some Christians and Jews."⁷⁷ The Jewish quarter was apparently emptied. The expelled sought shelter in Valencia.⁷⁸

King Pere remarked that the refugees went to Valencia "because of the hunger that is there [in Morvedre] and not out of zeal to return to our lordship."⁷⁹ He still felt that all royal subjects, Christian or Jewish, who had willingly remained in Morvedre until March 1365, without overtly resisting Castilian rule, had committed the crime of lese majesty.⁸⁰ Not about to pass up the opportunity to exact retribution from them, and to do so in a manner that would add something to his depleted war chest, the king commanded officials to confiscate the refugees' property, both the goods they brought with them to Valencia and any other possessions that might be found elsewhere.⁸¹

The Jewish refugees, however, were a special case. Holy Week was fast approaching and the Jews could not be left to wander about Valencia unprotected. Lest the Christians stone them during the Easter festivities, Pere put them in the special care of Guillem Colom, the treasurer of Queen Elionor, recipient of Morvedre's revenues before the Castilian occupation.⁸²

⁷⁷ López de Ayala, *Coronica*, 145: "E fue la mengua de las viandas mucha, ca comian los cauallos e las mulas que ya no tenian pan. . . ." See also Zurita, *Anales*, 4: 534–535; and n. 79.

⁷⁸ ACA: C 1209: 58r–v (28 March 1365): "Com entre les altres persones les quals son fora gitades de Murvedre e anades a Valencia haïam entes que son los juheus qui solien habitar en la dita vila."

⁷⁹ ACA: C 1211: 29r–v (20 March 1365): "Com haïam entes que alguns cristians e juheus de la vila de Murvedre per la fam qui hi es e no per zel de venir a nostra senyoria sien venguts a la ciutat de Valencia. . . ." The letter is addressed to Ramon de Vilanova, the royal treasurer.

⁸⁰ ACA: C 1209: 183r–v (30 March 1365): "Licet noviter comissionem fecerimus dilecto consiliario et thesaurario nostro Raymundo de Villanova super occupandis et prendis et ad manus suas habendis bonis hominum christianorum et judeorum ville Muriveteris nobis acquisitis propter crimen lese maiestatis per ipsos contra nos comissum. . . ." The letter is addressed to the royal household officials Domingo García and Alvaro de Herrera, who are instructed to confiscate "omnia bona quicumque hominum christianorum et judeorum ville Muriveteris predictorum ubicumque ea reperire poteritis," because Vilanova is occupied with other royal business.

⁸¹ See previous note; also ACA: C 1211: 43r–v (4 April 1365); and MR 350: 12v (17 April 1365), which shows that at this point goods valuing 3,000 sous b. had been received.

⁸² ACA: C 1209: 58r–v: "E nos per tal com la festa de pascha es prop en la

Pere's solicitude for traitorous Jewish vassals was not all that paradoxical. The Jewish community of Morvedre, he well knew, could hardly have battled alone against the troops of Pedro the Cruel. More to the point, once the Castilians ejected the Jews from Morvedre, they were again *his* to do with whatever he liked. Now that he controlled their persons, their possessions were also at his disposal. While pondering what to do with the Jews who had just arrived in Valencia, Pere commented to his treasurer, Ramon de Vilanova, that should he decide to distribute these Jews among his various *aljamas* there would be no need to appropriate their goods, "for in that case they will be our own possession (*cosa nostra propria*), which we can licitly take and apply for our own purposes whenever we want."⁸³

Pere in fact first opted to do just that. On 28 March he instructed Colom, the queen's treasurer, to put the Jews of Morvedre on ships, four days after Easter, for transport to Tortosa, Lleida, or other towns outside the kingdom of Valencia where there were *aljamas* under the queen's jurisdiction. The Jews would not lose the possessions they had carried with them from Morvedre, but they would have to pay passage duties. Colom, moreover, was to disabuse the Jews of the notion that they had any choice in the matter: all those who did not embark on that day were to be hanged.⁸⁴

setmana santa, de la qual festa los cristians solen a pedregar los juheus, vullem quels dits juheus de Murvedre sien aquí [in Valencia] sostenguts tro al quart dia apres de la dita festa. . . ." The Christian refugees, who obviously had nothing to fear from Easter, were, by contrast, not permitted to remain in Valencia, perhaps because of the additional drain they would have made on the capital's diminishing grain supply. See ACA: C 1211: 34v (26 March 1365); and C 1209: 59r (30 March 1365): "les persones foragitades de Murvedre . . . per res en Valencia no romanguen, salvant los juheus, los quals per raho de la pasqua, qui es prop, puxen aquí romanir tro al quart dia apres de la dita festa. . . ." In 1365 Easter fell on 13 April.

⁸³ ACA: C 1211: 29r-v: "En cas que nos dejam procehir contra los dits juheus o lurs bens, volem que aquells compartiscats per les nostres aljames e de aquelles bens alguns no prenat, com en aquell cas seran cosa nostra propria, la qual tots temps quen vullam legudament podem a nostres propriis uses pendre e aplicar."

⁸⁴ ACA: C 1209: 58r-v: "Per ço volem e us manam quels dits juheus metats en la dita ciutat [Valencia] els hi façats tornar e desemparar tot ço del lur segons que dit es e manats als dits juheus que sen vagen a Tortosa e a Leyda o altres parts fora del Regne de Valencia. . . . E res no menys al dit Batle general que haia e liure als dits juheus al dit dia aquelles barques que ops hauran per passar a les ciutats sobredites, ells empero pagants lo nolit de les dites barques. E desenganats los dits juheus que sen prests de parar al dit dia e exir de la dita ciutat sots pena de esser penjats." C 1209: 56v is a letter also written on 28 March but never sent, having been modified and sent in the form of 58r-v. In this letter (56v) Pere commands Colom to compel the Jews to "retre [hand over] los diners, robes e joyes

When 17 April arrived, however, Jews were neither shipped out nor hanged. King Pere had changed his mind.⁸⁵ Even though he was not to recover Morvedre for another five months, he must already have realized that the Castilian garrison could not hold out forever and so began to consider how this strategic town might be repopulated and its fortifications repaired. Allowing the Jews of Morvedre to return home might well prove useful. In the meantime they were to remain in Valencia. Royal officials resumed confiscating their goods along with those of the other “rebels” of Morvedre.⁸⁶

The king indeed had plans for Morvedre, and once the Castilian garrison surrendered, on 14 September 1365, he began to put them into effect. His initial impulse was to punish the town for its “rebellion.” As Pere’s *Chronicle* relates with undisguised relish, “We made the place of Morvedre into a [mere] street of Valencia.”⁸⁷ The municipality of Morvedre was, in other words, deprived of its autonomy. Although the town would still have its own government and officials, it would now, and forever more according to King Pere, fall under the civil and criminal jurisdiction of Valencia and pay certain taxes and extraordinary subventions along with the capital.⁸⁸ This measure suited the economic interests of Valencia, which could now effectively

quels han tolt a Valencia” (in 58r-v he commands Colom to restore confiscated goods to the Jews), and states more explicitly that the Jews of Morvedre are to be sent to Queen Elionor’s *aljamas*: “sien trameses a Tortosa, Leyda o altres parts fora del Regne de Valencia on haia juyries de la dita Reyna on habiten.”

⁸⁵ ACA: C 1209: 75v (17 April 1365): “Pero per alguns rahons volem e’us manam quels dits juheus fàçats en aquella ciutat romanir tro en altra manera hi haïam provehit, els fàçats tornar tot ço del lur si ja fet no es.”

⁸⁶ ACA: C 1573: 126r (4 May 1365), and 132r-v (12 May). In these letters Queen Elionor discusses “illis bonis que vos [Ramon de Vilanova] noviter occupastis ab hominibus christianis et judeis ac sarracenis ville Muriveteris rebellibus domini Regis,” noting that she and King Pere had agreed to divide the proceeds: two-thirds for her and one-third for Pere. Originally, in a letter of 1 September 1363 (cited in 132r), King Pere had ceded to the queen all the *bona* of the “rebels” of Tarazona, Teruel, Calatayud, and Morvedre. Pere, however, did not go so far as to allow officials to enslave and sell Jewish refugees from towns occupied by the Castilians. On 1 July 1365 he commanded the treasurer Vilanova not to sell the brothers Abraham and Isaac Piet, Jucef Rofos, and their families, all refugees from Sogorb—ACA: C 1211: 120r-v. On the other hand, he did order that 300 sous taken from them be given to a Carmelite convent in the capital (C 1211: 104v).

⁸⁷ Pere III, *Chronicle*, 2: 571.

⁸⁸ Pere had waited a long time for this moment: as early as 9 May 1364 he had acceded to the request of Valencia’s magistrates that Morvedre, along with Cullera and El Puig, be placed “for all time . . . within the *terme* and [fiscal] contribution” of Valencia. See *Aureum opus*, 129r.

dominate coastal markets in a region stretching from the Palancia to the Xúquer River, and the desire of the king for revenge.

The town Valencia brought under its jurisdiction in the fall of 1365 was merely a shell, and a broken one at that. Its castle was damaged, its walls shattered, and its inhabitants few in number.⁸⁹ The surrounding countryside had been ravaged by the armies of both kings. Rather like Jaume the Conqueror more than a century before, Pere the Ceremonious had to repopulate and revitalize Morvedre.

This proved to be a difficult and painful task, one that took several years to achieve.⁹⁰ King Pere and Queen Elionor, to whose treasury Morvedre remained attached, endeavored to attract to Morvedre both former residents and new settlers. They lured back the former with reduced fines or pardons and drew in the latter with grants of abandoned properties.⁹¹ Pere also bequeathed property to knights and officials as recompense for faithful service.⁹²

⁸⁹ On 30 March of the following year Pere had to ask the *jurats* of Morella to permit twenty-five men of their town to remain in Morvedre “per ço com en la dita vila de Murvedre no haja de present tanta gent que aquella poguessen guaytar e defendre.” A similar letter was sent to the master of the Order of Montesa. See ACA: C 1212: 59v–60r.

⁹⁰ The responsibility of financing the repairs to or reconstruction of the castle and town walls caused some residents to leave town. ACA: C 724: 125v (30 December 1366): in response to a plea of the municipality regarding its *inopia*, Pere advises the royal castellan and bailiff to proceed with repairs to the castle “en tal guisa que per oppressio de les dites obres los singulares de la dita universitat no haien a derrenclir [abandon] la habitacio d’aquella.” ACA: C 1614: 117r–v (18 March 1367): Nadala, the widow of Ramon Gerau, leaves town because of her poverty and local taxes. ACA: C 1077: 4r–v (20 May 1366) concerns an irrigation dispute between Morvedre and Sogorb; here Pere notes that any change in the established system could easily result in the *despoblacio* of Morvedre. The dispute nonetheless dragged on at least until late August 1366 (ACA: C 1213: 143r–144v; and C 1574: 120v–121r).

⁹¹ ACA: C 1212: 56v (22 March 1366): powers are given to Joan Alfons de Xèrica, *domicellus*, to grant safe-conducts protecting the persons and goods of “omnes et singulos homines cuicumque status, dictionis, preheminencie aut legis [i.e., religion] . . . qui ad nostrum servicium et dominium venire et redire villasque [i.e., towns in the kingdom of Valencia recovered from the Castilians] et loca . . . voluerint cum uxoribus, filiis et omnibus eorum bonis.” C 1622: 133v–134r (14 April 1372) refers to pardons granted to the people of Morvedre for their “rebellion [and] disobedience” on 28 September 1365, and again, apparently more definitively, on 31 August 1370. On the other hand, C 1212: 2r (27 January 1366) refers to “peccunia compositionum seu condemnationum hominum ville Muriveteris”—hence the need for a more definitive pardon in 1370. The monarchs and their officials were probably dealing with the original inhabitants of Morvedre on a case by case basis, pardoning some and fining others.

⁹² ACA: C 1077: 27r (28 May 1366), 29v (same date), 182r–v (4 October 1366); and C 1213: 12r (6 February 1366), 17r (18 February 1366).

Friction between begrudging natives of Morvedre and the newcomers brought in by the crown, many from Alacant and Oriola in the south, slowed the repopulation process. Sometimes resentment led to litigation and harassment, particularly when a citizen of Morvedre whom the war had displaced returned home.⁹³ New residents also found themselves wrangling with the municipality over the taxes for which their properties were liable.⁹⁴

The rapid deterioration of Morvedre's relations with the capital city compounded its internal difficulties. The municipality of Morvedre naturally bristled at its loss of complete autonomy and often contested both the legitimacy and the size of Valencia's fiscal exactions. Valencia's officials, on the other hand, proved to be hard taskmasters and aggressively asserted their newfound authority over their much smaller neighbor.⁹⁵ As a result of a dispute over the grazing of livestock, for instance, Valencia's militia marched on Morvedre in February 1367. Only the intervention of an angry Prince Joan prevented bloodshed.⁹⁶ A month later the *jurats* of Morvedre wrote

⁹³ ACA: C 726: 115v–116r (10 July 1366): King Pere reprimands the lieutenant justice of Morvedre because “vos, a instancia de alcuns de la dita vila qui haurien plaer de tot dampnatge e desonor que poguessen haver aquells qui nos havem en la dita vila novellament poblats, per ço com tenen e posseixen los bens que foren lurs o de lurs parents, prenets e injuriats en persones los dits novells pobladors voluntariament e fets contra ells tota execucio e enantament justament o injusta.” Also, C 726: 116r–v (same date), 99v (28 June 1366); and C 1214: 20r (18 February 1366) where Bernat de Vallebrera and Jacme Ermengau are admonished for having “maltractats tots aquells que nos havem heretats en Murvedre . . . servidors nostres.”

⁹⁴ ACA: C 726: 124v (15 July 1366): Ramon de Vilanova, the royal treasurer, is to rule on “causam seu questionem que vertitur seu verti de proximo speratur inter habitatores et vicinos ville Muriveteris antiquos ex una parte et novos populatores ville . . . ex altera super modo contribuendi inter se in peytis et aliis exactionibus eiusdem ville.” Also, C 724: 117r–v (31 December 1366); and C 737: 43v–44r (5 July 1367). Loyal nobles and royal servants whom King Pere had rewarded with land in the *terme* were especially chagrined by the municipality's demands—ACA: C 1077: 27r (28 May 1366), regarding Guillem Castell, commander of the local house of the Order of Sant Jordi; 182r–v (4 October), regarding Joan Ferrandis d'Herèdia; and C 737: 71r (3 August 1367), regarding the “homens de paratge per nos heretats novellament en la dita vila.”

⁹⁵ In May 1366 Valencia responded with “undue movements and great threats” when Morvedre contested its demand to collect certain taxes from it; this was causing people to flee Morvedre (ACA: C 1077: 24r–v, 25r). ACA: C 723: 177r–v (30 December 1366) addresses similar conflicts and similar effects.

⁹⁶ ACA: C 723: 175r–176r (29 December 1366) discusses the reciprocal actions of the officials of Morvedre and Valencia, each one confiscating securities from the other's citizens for having allegedly pastured their livestock in the wrong place. ACA: C 1614: 90r–v (1 February 1367): Prince Joan begins his letter to Garcia de Loric, *portant veus* of the governor, “Entes havem que per raho d'alsunes penyores

of the “hatred” the municipality of Valencia bore against the town and its people.⁹⁷ This unsatisfactory state of affairs moved Morvedre in 1370 to challenge in court Valencia’s jurisdiction over it. On 29 July 1371 King Pere and his judges found in favor of the capital.⁹⁸

War torn Morvedre would have appeared less than inviting to its former Jewish inhabitants, but it was home. Hence within nine months of King Pere’s recapture of Morvedre a recognizable Jewish community had again settled in the local *jueria*. The king’s offer to settlers, in March 1366, of safe-conduct and security against prosecution had likely reassured Jews fearing the royal wrath and repelled by the town’s condition.⁹⁹ Long-time Christian residents of Morvedre gave a less hostile reception to familiar Jewish faces than to Christian strangers from the south and royal favorites.

By the summer of 1366 the Jewish community had taken only the first steps on the road to demographic and economic recovery. In August former members of the community, who had perforce abandoned their homes and properties in Morvedre the year before, were still “wandering” through the *aljamas* of the kingdom, most likely Valencia, Llíria, Castelló, Borriana, and Vila-real. The wanderers were not destitute beggars but Jews of some means who still had not decided whether to return to Morvedre or to settle down in these other places where they had previously acquired property and perhaps established family branches. Queen Elionor and the reconstituted *aljama* of Morvedre were therefore inclined to force the issue for the benefit of both their treasuries. The queen instructed the local bailiff to command the wandering Jews to reside officially in Morvedre and pay the accustomed taxes; otherwise they would lose all property they had left in the town and its *terme*.¹⁰⁰

que son estades fetes axi en la ciutat de Valencia de homens de Murvedre com en la dita vila de Murvedre de homens de Valencia, la host de Valencia es exida o’s esforça de exir contra la dita vila de Murvedre. . . .” C 1614: 90v: Prince Joan orders Valencia not to permit the host to march. C 1708: 29r–v (3 February 1367): Prince Joan expresses anger, to Loriç and to the municipality of Valencia, that the militia had in fact marched and reached Puçol.

⁹⁷ ACA: C 731: 157r (10 March 1367). King Pere describes the concerns of the municipality of Morvedre, whose officials doubt that their counterparts in Valencia will tax Morvedre fairly, “propter odium quod contra dictam villam et habitatores eiusdem, ut dicitur, gerunt.”

⁹⁸ *Aureum opus*, 141v–144r. See also Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 284–290.

⁹⁹ ACA: C 1212: 56v (22 March 1366); see n. 91.

¹⁰⁰ ACA: C 1574: 116v–117r (12 August 1366): “Sicut relatatum est nobis, nonnulli iudei olim habitantes in villa predicta [Morvedre], dimissis pro nunc hospiciis

Still, it was not as if the Jews who had been living in Morvedre before and during the Castilian occupation had so many palatable options in 1366.¹⁰¹ The prior investment of considerable economic and social capital in the town insured that, like the Christians, most would return and make a go of it if conditions permitted. The essential conditions were pardon from the king, a livelihood, the acquisition of which depended partly on royal mercy, and a sustainable fiscal burden. In the tumultuous months following the Castilians' surrender, Jews found that at least some of these requirements were wanting.

The actions of the commissioners the king had sent out in 1365 to penalize the "rebels" and "deserters" of Morvedre impeded Jews from returning to the livings which had sustained them before the Castilian invasion. Jucef Çerruch and Jacob Abenrodric both learned that the royal commissioners had confiscated and sold the properties they possessed in the district of Borriana. The commissioners had also taken it on themselves to liquidate all debts owed to these Jewish "rebels." The debtors were required to render only a small sum to the commissioners—sums much smaller than the amounts they had originally borrowed from the Jews—and were allowed to keep the rest of the principal. Jucef and Jacob offered to recompense the debtors for the money they had paid to the commissioners and then to reach a fairer compromise with them. The debtors, needless to say, expressed little interest in renegotiating the terms of the original loans. Nine years later Jucef and an heir of Jacob, Abraham Abenrodric, were despairing of ever receiving their due,

et possessionibus ac aliis bonis que in dicta villa et eius terminis habebant, vagando incedunt per alias aljamas terre nostre quod in non modicum nostri et regalarum nostrarum ac etiam aljame judeorum dicte ville Muriveteris detrimentum et preiudicium noscitur redundare."

¹⁰¹ The situation of the Jews of Llíria, a town the Castilians had also occupied that also formed part of Queen Elionor's patrimony, substantiates this point. By mid-August 1366 Jews of Llíria residing in Valencia were complaining about the attempts of officials of Valencia's *aljama* to collect taxes from them, even though they had allegedly already rendered their due to Llíria's *aljama* (ACA: C 1574: 113v–114r). At the same time Jews of Llíria living in Llíria voiced various complaints regarding the improper fiscal initiatives of municipal officials (C 1574: 119r–v, 121r–122r). Not surprisingly, the queen had to deal with the additional problem of Jews abandoning Llíria (C 1574: 113r–v). In other words, Jews from Morvedre who might have been "wandering" through Valencia or Llíria would not have found a long-term stay in either place too promising.

since the six-year limitation on the collection of outstanding debts had long passed.¹⁰²

The great destruction and upheaval that the armies of Pedro and Pere had caused made it difficult for many Jews—and no doubt for Christians and Muslims as well—to collect debts, claim inheritances, or properly complete transactions initiated before or during the war. The loss of notarial registers created considerable problems, as Samuel Avincanes and Maymó Lobell discovered when they tried to locate the heritable assets of a deceased kinsman, Salamó Asseyo.¹⁰³

The war had hit seignorial lands especially hard. Armies had burned crops, prevented the peasants from planting, and caused the abandonment of farms and villages.¹⁰⁴ The Jews of Morvedre, who had long invested substantial resources in seignorial economies, were bound to encounter resistance when attempting to recover debts and other assets from lords and peasants struggling to rebuild after years

¹⁰² ACA: C 729: 121r–v (28 November 1366) is the plea of Jacob Abenrodric which is almost exactly the same as that of Jucef Çerruch—C 731: 21r (same date)—“quod aliqui ex comissariis nostris ordinatis ad annotandum et accipiendum bona hominum dicte ville Muriveteris tunc rebellium ac etiam transfugarum vendiderunt aliqua boan sedentia et moventia que ipse possidebat in termino Burriane et in eius convicinio. Necnon de debitis que cum cirograffo eidem Juceffo debebantur fecerunt cum eiusdem debitoribus compositiones, cedendo residuum ipsis debitoribus, que omnia debita et in dictos debitores per modos predictos transportata fuerunt pauciori valde precio et exili. Et quod licet ipse paratum se affatur, ut asserit, solvere suis debitoribus precium inde solum comissariis supradictis seu illud in suo composito admittere, hoc tamen iidem debitores facere contradicunt, ex quibus predictus Juceffus asserit se fore gravatum contra forum et etiam rationem.” ACA: C 784: 111r (18 December 1375) and C 788: 148v (26 June 1376) are the later complaints of Çerruch and Abenrodric. In the first letter the king orders the governor to rule on the case; in the latter he orders officials to proceed against the debtors in those cases in which the Jews’ allegations can be verified. ACA: C 1614: 123r–v (20 March 1367) and C 733: 15v (13 May 1367) show that Meora Avinaçara was experiencing similar difficulties because King Pere had granted to Pere Ribera, a notary of Valencia, and his wife Caterina the 733 sous 4 diners which Caterina and her first husband, Joan Aguells of Morvedre, had borrowed from Meora prior to the Castilian occupation.

¹⁰³ ACA: C 1616: 6v–7r (29 November 1367). Asseyo was from Morvedre as was Avincanes, his nephew. Lobell, his son-in-law, lived in Xàtiva. From the document it appears that Asseyo’s assets were widely distributed: in Morvedre, Borriana, Almenara, Xilxes, Nules, Vila-real “et aliarum villarum et locorum intra regnum Valencie.” A similar case—ACA: C 1614: 98v–99r (23 February 1367)—is that of “Jacob, filius Rabi David quondam, judeus oriundus dicte civitatis [Teruel] nunc vero comorans in villa Muriveteris.” When the Castilians took Teruel, Jacob moved to Valencia and remained there in the king’s service throughout the war. During the Castilian occupation of Teruel much of Jacob’s property was sold or lost, as was much of the relevant legal documentation.

¹⁰⁴ Boswell, *Royal Treasure*, 385–390, especially regarding Muslim peasants.

of war. Seigneurs such as Nicolau de Pròixida, the lord of Almenara, whose tenants had depended heavily on Jewish loans, managed to obtain from King Pere and Queen Elionor moratoria shielding their peasants from the legal initiatives of Jewish creditors.¹⁰⁵ The tactics of the seigneurs, however, were not only defensive. Maintaining that the Jews of Morvedre had, because of their “crime of rebellion” against the king, forfeited all their possessions, some lords refused the Jews access to the properties and other assets they owned on their estates and seized them for themselves. The monarchs allowed this state of affairs to persist for a few years, though sometimes unwittingly, and thus promoted the reconstruction of seigneurial domains at the expense of the Jews. By 1369, however, enough was enough. The Jews of Morvedre could not bear being shut out from the lands of the seigneurs indefinitely. On 2 February Elionor revoked all moratoria and instructed royal officials to see to it that the lords permitted the Jews to collect the debts owed them. Moreover, since the king had by now pardoned the Jews for their rebellion, all the property the Jews had possessed on the lords’ estates before the war was to be fully restored to them.¹⁰⁶

Castilian occupation, expulsion from their homes, months of wandering and uncertainty, and the resistance and perhaps overt hostility they encountered from lords, peasants, and anyone else indebted to them—all this must have demoralized and frustrated a good number of Morvedre’s Jews. It all seems to have taken a toll on Astruga, the wife of Gençon Levi. Levi worked as an itinerant merchant and moneylender; as such, he must have sustained significant losses during the war and met with many obstacles to recouping them in subsequent years. At some point, probably in 1367, Levi and his wife were temporarily residing and conducting business in Onda, a town which had not suffered much during the war and where they likely

¹⁰⁵ ACA: C 1574: 35v (16 May 1366) is the complaint of the people of Almenara that the bailiff of Morvedre was not observing the “formam remissionis et concessionis . . . de omnibus et quibuscumque censibus agrariis, debitis, nominibus sive creditis per universitatem et eius singulares debitis quibuscumque christianis, judeis aut sarracenis ville Muriveteris.” The queen ordered the bailiff to cease his procedures against the delinquent peasants. C 1574: 112r–v (13 August 1366) is the queen’s new order overriding the moratorium “ad instantiam judeorum dicte ville,” which shows that the Jews were the creditors of Morvedre mainly implicated in the affairs of Almenara. C 1574: 120r–v (5 September 1366) is Elionor’s decision, in response to the pleas of Pròixida, to uphold the moratorium.

¹⁰⁶ ACA: C 1577: 32v–33r (2 February 1369).

received a warmer reception from the local population. Indeed both Gençon and Astruga made friends there. Astruga got along so well with some of the Christian women, especially one Maria Sanç, that they were able to persuade her to convert to Christianity. To Astruga, now Constança, Onda must have appeared a peaceful haven and a welcome change after years of turmoil (and possibly after years of unhappy marriage). In the eyes of Gençon, however, the town quickly acquired a more sinister aspect after his wife's baptism. Fearing that Constança and her Christian companions would take his goods, Gençon entrusted them to his friends Pere Martí and Na Barbara. Gençon's suspicions were well founded, for Maria Sanç, who was connected to the household of the local commander of the Order of Montesa, soon engineered the theft of his goods from the homes of his friends.¹⁰⁷

The conversion of Astruga was an exceptional Jewish response to the difficult circumstances prevalent in the region during the years of war and reconstruction. Even though very few Jews were likely to abandon their faith, particularly when the situation of their Christian neighbors in Morvedre was not noticeably better, some might eventually leave town if life in Morvedre did not show some signs of improving and if their royal lord, Queen Elionor, did not prove solicitous of their needs. Fortunately the queen was equal to the task. She promoted an image of herself as a benevolent lord. When, for example, she admonished municipal officials to demand less from

¹⁰⁷ ACA: C 1617: 24v–25r (1 April 1368): “Exposuit nobis humiliter Gençonus Levi, judeus ville Muriveteris, quod tempore quo ipse inhabitabat in dicto loco de Onda habebat in uxorem Astrugam, que tam ad inductionem Marie Sancii dicti loci quam aliarum cristicolarum babtisma [sic] suscepit, cui nomen Constantie fuit impositum. Et dictus judeus, timens ne bona sua per dictam Constantiam transportarentur, comendavit in domibus Petri Martini et de Na Barbara, vicinorum dicti loci, diversa bona mobilia tam argenti quam alia et pignera; et dicta Maria Sancii . . . de domo [(. . .)] Petri de Besella, Comendatoris eiusdem loci de Onda, abstraxit bona eadem et pignera a dictis domibus, ut dicitur, violenter. Et licet pro parte dicti judei dicta Maria requisita fuit ut bona ipsa exponenti redderet supra dicto, ipsa vero illud facere contradixit quamquam dicti Petrus Martini et Na Barbara coram nobis exposuerint comandam dictorum bonorum et abstractionem eorum predictas fore veras.” Prince Joan responds to Levi's plea by instructing the justice of Onda to rule on the case.

Astruga/Constança had possibly been influenced by the sermons of an itinerant preacher. In April 1369 the *jurats* of Vila-real, which is not far from Onda, paid the preacher Pere de Conves 5 sous “per un sermo que feu als juheus [of Vila-real].” See Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 291, no. 7.

the Jews for castle and wall repairs, she asked that they inform the Jews that they were acting thus at her urging.¹⁰⁸

The re-emergence and persistence of a Jewish community in Morvedre after the Castilian occupation owed much to Queen Elionor's prudent administration. Because the Jews' economic opportunities in the wider region were limited for some years after the war, the financial situation of the *aljama* was especially precarious. Her foresighted fiscal policy was therefore absolutely crucial for the process of reconstruction.

Sensitive to the "damages and scandals" the Jews had suffered on account of the Castilian occupation, in August 1366 Elionor forgave the Jews all taxes they normally would have paid to King Pere during the months extending from the Castilians' capture of Morvedre until their surrender of it the previous September.¹⁰⁹ She only gradually increased the amount of the *aljama*'s annual tribute to the 2,000 sous it had rendered her before the war (see Table 7). On her instructions, the bailiff of Morvedre and two local Jews of his choice carefully determined the contributions to be made by each Jewish household to these tributes.¹¹⁰

Elionor also endeavored to limit the exaction of potentially ruinous extraordinary subsidies from the *aljama* of Morvedre and other *aljamas* pertaining to her treasury (see Table 8). In 1369, when her husband's treasurer, Ramon de Vilanova, ordered the Valencian *aljamas* to send representatives to negotiate the subsidies the king needed for defensive action against the unruly mercenary Companies, then passing through Catalonia en route to Castile, she commanded the bailiff of Morvedre to advise the local Jews neither to designate a representative

¹⁰⁸ ACA: C 1574: 116v (14 August 1366): "vosaltres [municipal officials] immoderament contra raho los [Jews] taxats els fets pagar ensemps ab vosaltres en les obres del castell, dels murs e valls, e en les cases que havets imposades per vostres necessitats, la qual cosa torna en gran dampnatge de la aljama dels dits juheus . . . vos pregam que per honor de nos vos vullats haver envers la dita aljama e sos singulars benignament e favorable, axi en les dites obres com en altres carrechs, e que aytant com puschats los alleugets de messions e de carrechs, esguardada lur fretura e inopia. E en tal manera que coneguen que per nostres prechs son alleujats dels dits carrechs e messions a les quals no poden complir. Sabents que aço vos tendrem en servey, el contrari nos desplauria molt."

¹⁰⁹ ACA: C 1574: 112v–113r (13 August 1366): "Ad dampna et scandala que vos aljama judeorum ville nostre Muriveteris et singulares vestri propter occupationem, quam Rex Castelle dudum fecit de villa predicta, multipliciter passi estis nostrum intuitum misericorditer dirigentes. . . ."

¹¹⁰ ACA: C 1574: 120r (13 August 1366).

Table 7: Ordinary Tributes Paid by Jews of Morvedre (1366–1390)

Year	Amount	Remissions; Related Measures
1366	500 s.b. ^a	Remission of all taxes <i>aljama</i> had been obliged to pay during Castilian occupation ^b
1367	1,000 s.b. ^c	
1368	1,000 s.b. ^d	
1369	1,000 s.b. ^e	
1370	1,000 s.b. ^f	
1371	1,000 s.b. ^g	
1372	2,000 s.b. ^h	Remission of 500 s.b. ⁱ
1373	2,100 s.b. ^j	
1374	2,200 s.b. ^k	
1375	?	
1376–1492	2,000 s. ^l	

^a ACA: C 1574: 111v–112r (13 July 1366).^b ACA: C 1574: 112v–113r (13 August 1366).^c ACA: MR 489: 2v (January 1367), 44v (June 1367). MR 482: 13r (February 1363) shows that the *aljama*'s tribute just before the Castilian occupation was twice the size of that requested in 1367.^d ACA: MR 491: 6r (January 1368); MR 492: 5r (July 1368), 44r (December 1368).^e ACA: C 1575: 188r–v (17 October 1368).^f ACA: MR 495: 39v (May 1370); MR 496: 22v (September 1370).^g ACA: MR 497: 37v (May 1371); MR 498: 30r (October 1371).^h ACA: C 1580: 136r (15 March 1372).ⁱ ACA: C 1581: 26v (3 July 1372). ACA: MR 500: 20v, 40v records the payment of 1,500 sous by the Jews of Morvedre.^j ACA: C 1581: 114v–115r (1 May 1373); MR 501: 38v (June 1373); MR 502: 42v (December 1373).^k ACA: C 1583: 66r–v (26 January 1374); MR 503: 44r (May 1374); MR 504: 29r (October 1374).^l With the exception of 1378, when the tribute rose to 2,500 sous. ACA: C 1475: 12r (5 January 1376), 34r (31 January 1377), 50v–51r (5 February 1378), 68v (2 May 1379), 74v (29 December 1379 [for 1380]), and 126r–v (19 March 1381). ARV: MR registers 3985–4024 are the accounts of the bailiff of Morvedre between 1382 and 1492, although the accounts for 1386–90 are no longer extant.

nor to pay anything. She then chastised Vilanova, reminding him, with some exaggeration, just how poor the Valencian *aljamas* were.¹¹¹

By Elionor's reckoning, only the *aljama* of Valencia was still a reliable source of revenue. From it she received annually a tribute of 12,000 sous b. In addition to this substantial sum, the *aljama* paid 10,000 sous b. in 1368 and 2,000 sous b. in 1369 towards the queen's expenses. Although the Jews of Valencia had always provided the lion's share of the crown's Jewish revenue, there was a compelling reason why it did so in the years immediately following the war: a good number of the Jews the war had affected and displaced moved to the capital, at least temporarily.¹¹²

In 1369 the *aljama* of Morvedre certainly did not have the numbers to handle large extraordinary taxes; at the same time, such taxes scared off the very Jews it hoped to attract. Hence for the next two years Queen Elionor did not request any extraordinary subsidies from the *aljama*, and apparently persuaded the king and his treasurer as to the wisdom of this policy.¹¹³ In September 1370 she moved to rectify the *aljama's* demographic deficit, instructing Bonafonat de Sant Feliu, the bailiff of Morvedre, about how to encourage Jews "who are of a mind to come settle there." He should tell them that the fiscal demands the queen had been making—and which "we

¹¹¹ ACA: C 1577: 33r-v (1 February 1369), and 33v-34r (same date), are addressed to Vilanova and the bailiff of Morvedre, respectively. Elionor asserted that the *aljama* of Xàtiva was so indigent she had been compelled to release it from all fiscal obligations. This was untrue, for she had received tributes of 1,500 sous b. from it in both 1368 and 1369 (ACA: MR 491: 72r-v; MR 492: 38r; MR 494: 22v-23r). As for Alzira, the queen stated that a *demanda* on her part had caused all the Jews, save one household, to leave town. Judging from Furió, "Jueus d'Alzira," 134, 144-148, she was again stretching the truth. C 1474: 11v (6 December 1368) is the letter of King Pere to the Valencian *aljamas* ordering them to send representatives to Vilanova to discuss subventions "*ratione guerrarum*"; 19r (26 June 1369) shows that the meeting with the *aljama* representatives still had not taken place, probably because of Queen Elionor's objections.

¹¹² ACA: MR 488 (1366), 489 (1367), 491-492 (1368), and 493-494 (1369). Queen Elionor could also draw on the massive financial resources of Jahudà Alatzar, who loaned her 87,000 sous in 1370 (MR 495: 11r). See also Riera, "Jafudà Alatzar."

¹¹³ King Pere acknowledged the *aljama's* straitened circumstances by permitting its officials to levy taxes on the sale of *kasher* foodstuffs and other items for the purpose of handling communal debts and expenses (ACA: C 919: 135r-v [3 August 1370]). C 753: 138v (28 November 1370) treats the complaint of Jacob Ategir, a Jew from Morvedre, that *aljama* officials compelled him to pay 60 sous b. for goods he had bought and sold in Valencia and on the lands of the Order of Montesa before the king licensed the *aljama* to impose the sales-taxes.

Table 8: Extraordinary Taxation of Valencian Jews by Pere III and Joan I (1366–1390)

Year	Amount—Kingdom	Amount—Morvedre	Reason	Remissions; Related Measures
1368	2,300 s.b.	700 s.b.	Campaign in Sardinia ^a	
1368	1,630 s	Unspecified	To Prince Joan for expenses ^b	
1369	4,000 s (excluding <i>aljama</i> of Valencia)	1,000 s	Expedition to Sardinia ^c	400 s to Morvedre ^d
1374		Unspecified (Jews and Christians)	Provisions for royal castle and for starving people of Menorca ^e	
1374	11,000 s.b.	500 s.b.	Unspecified	
1374	40,700 s loan (in addition to contribution of Jahudà Alatzar)	3,300 s loan	Loan to Prince Joan for campaign in Rosselló and Cerdanya against Jaume “IV” of Mallorca ^g	Loan to be repaid by Diputació of Catalonia and secured with revenue of Diputació of Valencia
1375	Unspecified	80 florins	Expenses of wedding of Princess Elionor ^h	
1378	Unspecified	100 florins	General remission of penalties for all crimes, except sorcery and miscegenation ⁱ	
1380	Unspecified	Unspecified	Coronation of Queen Sibilia ^j	
1383	47,300 s loan	3,300 s loan	Unspecified ^k	Loan to be repaid through deductions from <i>aljamas</i> ’ annual tributes
1386		1,000 s	Unspecified ^l	
1389	13,417 s (from Jewish and Muslim <i>aljamas</i>)		Debts of King Joan ^m	
1390	Unspecified	440 s	King’s “necessities” ⁿ	

^a ACA: C 1575: 124r (22 April 1368); ACA: MR 492: 5v (July 1368).

^b ACA: C 1618: 1r (3 May 1368). The prince's letter notes the dispute between the *aljamas* of Morvedre and Valencia over the subsidy but does not specify the amount contributed by each *aljama*.

^c ACA: C 1577: 86r (7 July 1369). The subsidies to be paid by the other *aljamas* are 1,500 sous by Xàtiva, 1,000 sous by Alzira, and 500 sous by Borriana.

^d ACA: C 1577: 97r (8 August 1369). ACA: MR 358: 48r (December 1369) records the receipt of 600 sous from the Jews of Morvedre; the monies received from the Jews of Borriana, Xàtiva, and Alzira are recorded at 18v and 30v.

^e ACA: C 1583: 167r (21 October 1374): 25 *cafficos* of grain for the queen's castle at Cervello which the bailiff should purchase from the people of Morvedre if necessary; and 172r (27 December 1374) regarding Menorca.

^f ACA: C 1583: 67r (25 January 1374). The queen notes that "inducimur . . . quadam inexcusabili ratione."

^g ACA: C 1651: 84r-v (19 October 1374).

^h ACA: C 1474: 182v (3 October 1375).

ⁱ ACA: C 932: 38r (13 April 1378). The same general remission was also granted to, or purchased by, the Aragonese *aljamas* of Ejea and Uncastillo.

^j ACA: C 1475: 105r (17 November 1380).

^k ACA: C 1281: 140r-v (20 October 1383) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 363].

^l ACA: ARV: P 2810, B. de la Mata: n.f. (20 September 1386). The *aljama* pays 200 of the 1,000 sous to a royal porter and agrees to pay the rest in two 400-sous installments the following Easter and the following August. ACA: C 1476: 93r (11 August 1386) for the king's original demand of the *ajuda*.

^m ACA: MR 387: 53r (December 1389). ACA: C 1977: 46v (November 1389) [Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 214–15, no. 54] is a letter of King Joan requesting contributions from his Jewish and Muslim *aljamas* "per supportar les mes grans necessitats," including 660 sous from the Jews of Morvedre. This was perhaps their part of the 13,417 sous collected in December. In January 1387 Joan had asked the *aljamas* to send envoys with documents recording their fiscal responsibilities and debts. He was obviously preparing to tax the *aljamas*.

ⁿ ACA: MR 389: 57v (December 1390). ACA: C 1977: 97v (20 January 1390) and C 1958: 117v (15 October 1390) are both orders to the *aljamas* to send representatives to confer with the royal treasurer about subsidies.

intend to make, God willing”—of her *aljamas*, and especially of the *aljama* of Morvedre, were reasonable and tolerable, such that for the last two or three years the *aljamas* could “give a certain something each year.”¹¹⁴ There was nothing disingenuous in all of this. Elionor was simply offering the Jews the prospect of living under a fiscal regime which, as long as she controlled it, would not be rapacious and would enable the community to rebuild.¹¹⁵

Judging by the size of the annual tributes Queen Elionor sought from the Jewish community (see Table 7), the year 1372 was a turning-point in its post-bellum reconstruction.¹¹⁶ The growth of the Jewish population, and of the taxes it proffered the queen, lagged slightly behind that of the Christian population.¹¹⁷ Since most Jews had little desire to return to a ghost town, it is not surprising that the repopulation of the Jewish quarter quickened considerably after 1369, by which time the streets of the Christian neighborhoods were evidently

¹¹⁴ ACA: C 1579: 81r–v (1 September 1370): “Mas aqueys que deys qui han en cor de venir poblar alli deven pensar que les altres aljames nostres, e aqueixa en especial de Murvedre, havem comportades en lurs peytes e carrechs e entenem a fer, deu volent . . . que per algun poch temps, ço es II o III anys, nos donen certa cosa cascun any. . . .” The queen began the letter by advising the bailiff not to make individual fiscal agreements with each Jew who settled in Morvedre, for she learned from experience that this was not good policy (“Car una vegada ho fahem que no fou ben fet e per aço nols hi volem acostumar.”) Such individual arrangements infringed on *aljama* autonomy and made it extremely difficult for it to assess the taxable income of its members and to pursue any kind of reasonable fiscal planning. See Table 7 for the receipt of the 1,000-sous annual tributes from the Jews of Morvedre in 1368–71.

¹¹⁵ In 1374 Elionor would react strongly to Prince Joan’s plan to borrow 40,700 sous from the Valencian *aljamas* (see Table 8), warning him that the *aljamas* were already burdened enough and that “if you wish to oppress them further . . . it would only lead to their undoing and we would lose them” (ACA: C 1582: 106r [27 October 1374]).

¹¹⁶ The Jewish community in Llíria, a town the Castilians had also captured, benefited as well from the careful stewardship of Queen Elionor. In 1368 it paid an annual tribute of 800 sous b., and by 1370 it was rendering a tribute of 1,200 sous to the queen. It continued to pay this amount in subsequent years (with the exception of 1372 when it paid 1,000 sous), which indicates that, while smaller than the *aljama* of Morvedre, it had achieved a level of demographic and economic stability. See ACA: MR 491–504.

¹¹⁷ The growth of the Christian population is evident in the sums the municipality contributed to the queen’s treasury each year. ACA: MR 489 (1367 [but also recording payments from 1366]): approximately 2,000 sous b.; MR 491–492 (1368): 8,100 sous b.; MR 493–494 (1369): 16,300 sous b.; MR 497–498 (1371): 15,132 sous b.; and MR 501–502 (1373): 14,451 sous. For the Christian community 1369 was clearly the turning-point.

buzzing with life. Throughout these years of reconstruction a significant portion of the revenue the queen received from Morvedre was rendered by the Jews: for instance, the Jews paid one-third of the total in 1367, approximately one-ninth in 1368, and approximately one-eighth in 1373.

But after the autumn of 1370 the ordinary taxes the Jews rendered actually amounted to more than the sums they paid directly into the royal treasury. By virtue of an agreement reached between the *aljama* and the municipality of Morvedre on 22 September, the Jews were henceforth to pay all the sales-taxes (*cises*), utility fees, and other levies that the municipality collected from local Christians.¹¹⁸ Since the crown annually received as ordinary revenue a portion of the taxes levied by the municipality, the Jews were, after 1370, indirectly paying more ordinary taxes to the crown. More importantly, with the Jews contributing to municipal revenue, the repopulation of the Jewish quarter was now essential to the reconstruction of Morvedre and to the solvency of its government.¹¹⁹

The fleecing of the *aljama* of Morvedre and of other Valencian *aljamas* did not ensue with Queen Elionor's death in April 1375.¹²⁰ This was not simply a consequence of the king's realization that his Jewish communities were no longer as affluent, relative to the rest of the kingdom's population, as they had been in the first half of the fourteenth century. King Pere was more desperate than ever for money and was likely to grab it wherever and whenever he could. Of far greater importance was the development, over the course of

¹¹⁸ ARV: B 1152: 1485r (30 August 1458) [Hinojosa, *Jews*, no. 575]. This letter of the bailiff general, which treats a fiscal dispute between the *aljama* and the municipality, cites the key clauses of this agreement, which had been recorded in 1370 by the notary Jaume de Assio.

¹¹⁹ Municipal officials thus made an unsuccessful attempt in June 1374 to alter the agreement so that the Jews would provide even more revenue (ACA: C 774: 135v–136r).

¹²⁰ Still, the Jews of Morvedre did provide Prince Joan with some unspecified subventions. In February 1383 he confirmed all their privileges and immunities in recognition of their past service to him (ACA: C 1688: 32r). In 1371, in order to defray the expenses of his upcoming marriage to a French princess, which never took place due to her untimely death, Joan had collected contributions from various Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities, including 440 sous from the Jews of Morvedre (J.M. Roca, *Johan I d'Aragó* [Barcelona, 1929], 48–49, 421–422). Letters sent by King Pere to Prince Joan, the governor general, and other royal officials in April 1383 suggest that the prince's harassment induced various Jewish communities to do him “service”—C 1687: 221v–222v, 225v–226r [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 356].

the later fourteenth century, of a new fiscal regime in which the Corts and its permanent administrative body, the *Generalitat*, new forms of taxation, and new credit mechanisms, like the *censal*, became central. In the changing configuration of royal finances the Jews assumed a different and progressively less significant position.

Despite his triumph over the Unions of Aragon and Valencia in 1348, the long war with Castile and the perpetual struggle with the Genoese and the rebellious Sards left King Pere ever more dependent on the cooperation of his subjects and the taxes they voted him in the many meetings of their representative assemblies. The Valencian Corts met nine times between 1357 and 1374, and, like the Catalan Corts, wielded considerable political power. At the Corts of Monzón in 1362–63 a new and more efficient system of royal finance and taxation was established. Previously, when the Corts conceded taxes—or donations, as they called them—to the crown, the funds were collected in two ways: through the assignment of specific quantities to each estate, which were then divided up among and collected from the households within it (*compartiments*); and through indirect taxes, mainly on foodstuffs. Now, in addition to these sources, a new series of general taxes was created—the *generalitats*—which were levied on textile production and on external commerce, the most dynamic sectors of the Valencian economy. The newly created permanent delegation of the Corts, the *Generalitat*, administered and controlled these vast fiscal resources. It had more money under its control than the royal treasury.

At the same time, the cities and towns of the kingdom gained greater financial autonomy. Although since 1321 towns (and *aljamas*) had been granted the right to impose indirect taxes (*cises*) temporarily in order to meet the crown's fiscal demands, in 1363 King Pere made it a permanent right for all the towns.

These developments coincided with the widespread and increasing use of the new credit mechanisms, the *censal* and the *violari*. With all of these elements in place, deficit spending by municipal and royal governments became the order of the day. Municipalities, for example, in order to pay royal taxes or to fund public works, borrowed money from *censalistas* whom they requited with low-interest annuities (*pensions de censals*) drawn from the series of *cises* they now had the right to levy. Or the king sometimes borrowed money from private banks, towns, and wealthy subjects and repaid them with

annuities secured on his ordinary patrimonial revenues or from the extraordinary subsidies voted by the Corts.¹²¹

Fundamental, then, to the new fiscal regime were the economic expansion of the city and kingdom of Valencia in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, which made the *generalitats* so lucrative, and the new instruments of credit, which also facilitated commercial and industrial development. When king, Corts, and urban governments could exploit the burgeoning Valencian economy through a wide range of sales-taxes and tariffs, and rapidly contract loans with *censalistas* eager to invest in low-risk annuities, direct fiscal exploitation of the Jewish communities was bound to figure less prominently in the calculations of royal treasurers. The Jews' taxable resources had diminished and extracting revenue from them had proved increasingly troublesome. Like Christians and Muslims, the Jews were of course liable to most commercial duties and sales-taxes, but the monies to be found in *aljama* treasuries now meant less in the larger scheme of things.

With the growing importance of the various forms of indirect taxation, the quantities of ordinary taxes the king collected from the towns comprising his patrimony—*peites*, agricultural taxes, utility fees, and so on—became fixed and predictable.¹²² This was also the case for the ordinary taxes rendered by the crown's Jewish and Muslim *aljamas*. Thus, although Queen Elionor had gradually augmented the size of the annual tribute of the Jews of Morvedre while keeping extraordinary subsidies at a minimum, after her death the annual tribute (or *peita ordinaria*, as it was often termed) actually decreased slightly to 2,000 sous. It remained unchanged until 1492.¹²³

¹²¹ Sánchez, "Evolución," 415–422; R. Muñoz Pomer, *Orígenes de la Generalitat Valenciana* (Valencia, 1987); *idem*, "Las Cortes valencianas y el cambio de las estructuras fiscales en el tránsito del siglo XIV al XV," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 22 (1992), 463–483; Furió, *Història*, 117–120; and W. Küchler, *Les finances de la Corona d'Aragó al segle XV (regnats d'Alfons V i Joan II)*, trans. V. Fariás Zurita (Valencia, 1997), some of whose conclusions are applicable to the final quarter of the fourteenth century.

¹²² Küchler, *Finances*, 102–109. R. Narbona Vizcaíno, "Finanzas municipales y patriciado urbano. Valencia a finales del Trecentos," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 22 (1992), 485–512; and P. Viciano Navarro, "Fiscalitat local i deute públic al País Valencià. L'administració de la vila de Borriana a mitjan segle XV," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 22 (1992), 513–533, are local studies which reflect these developments well.

¹²³ See Table 7.

The monarchs, both Pere III (d. 1387) and his successor Joan I (d. 1396), continued to call on the Jews of Morvedre, and the other Jewish communities, to provide extraordinary subsidies and loans. The subsidies were not outrageous and do not seem to have caused the *aljama* grave difficulties (see Table 8). Both monarchs facilitated the payment process by authorizing the *adelantats* to levy internal sales-taxes.¹²⁴ Joan also permitted the *aljama* to sell *censals* for the purpose of rapidly raising funds.¹²⁵

The loans the *aljamas* advanced to Pere and Joan reveal more clearly the changing place of the Jews in royal finance. For example, in 1383, in the wake of the failure of most Catalan banks, King Pere borrowed 47,300 sous from the Valencian *aljamas*. The *aljamas* were to raise the money for the loan by borrowing it through the sale of annuities (*censals*). The king intended to indemnify the *aljamas* and to protect them from their *censalista* creditors by deducting from their annual tribute payments the amounts they paid out for these annuities.¹²⁶

In other words, the *aljamas* were borrowing money on behalf of the crown by selling annuities to affluent Christians. The loans thus obtained went into royal coffers and were secured on the revenues of the *aljamas*, part of the royal patrimony. The *aljama* of Morvedre had already enmeshed itself in this web of royal finance in 1380, although in less circuitous fashion. On 27 August David el Rau, representative of the *aljama*, along with Pere Marrades and Miquel Palau, representatives of the crown, sold an annuity of 1,000 sous to Sibilia, the wealthy wife of Joan Llopis de Boil, for the price of 12,000 sous. Marrades and Palau received the 12,000 sous, which Sibilia was, in effect, lending to the king. The *aljama* reimbursed her by paying her

¹²⁴ ACA: C 932: 52v–53r (18 April 1378) for three years; C 1893: 33r–v (21 October 1387) for five years; and C 1898: 105v (1 August 1390) for five years.

¹²⁵ ACA: C 1892: 102r–v (10 December 1387): a *censal* of 500 sous specifically for liquidating another *censal* owed to Joan Suau, Jr., citizen of Valencia; and C 1899: 78v–79r (5 December 1390): a *censal* of 1,000 sous.

¹²⁶ ACA: C 1281: 140r–v (20 October 1383) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 363]. Oddly enough, the accounts of the bailiff of Morvedre for 1383 and subsequent years make no reference at all to the sale of a *censal* by the *aljama* of Morvedre as a result of King Pere's command. Perhaps the sale was never made, or the loan became an unrequited subsidy and thus was not mentioned by the bailiff in relation to the annual tribute. Considering the state of the king's finances, it is not likely that he fully indemnified the *aljama* within a year. Whether or not Pere's orders to Arnau Porta were actually executed, what is of interest here is the method of obtaining money from the Jews.

a 1,000-sous pension on 15 August of each year, starting in 1382. From that year until 1415 the local bailiff dutifully deducted the 1,000 sous received by Sibilia from the 2,000-sous tribute rendered by the *aljama*.¹²⁷

Even with the new fiscal restraint, the *aljama* could not have borne its tax burden if Morvedre's Jewish quarter had not been largely repopulated. The list of Jewish household heads liable for property taxes compiled by the collector of the *morabatí* in 1379 shows that by this time the community comprised twenty-eight distinct families (or lineages), according to surname, distributed among forty-one separate households.¹²⁸ This was only four less than the forty-five household heads indemnified by the crown in 1352. The repopulation of Christian Morvedre had also been a success: 1,297 hearths in 1379 compared to the 1,435 in 1355.¹²⁹ As in the decades prior to the war with Castile, the Jews constituted approximately three percent of Morvedre's total population.

Significantly, the majority of the Jewish household heads recorded in 1379 were members of families who had resided in Morvedre at some point during the twenty or so years preceding the Castilian occupation of 1363. Eighteen of the twenty-eight family names, constituting twenty-nine of the forty-one households, can be traced to antebellum Morvedre.¹³⁰ In other words, the majority of Jews living

¹²⁷ ARV: MR 3985: M. 1, 3r-v, marginalia (1382); and MR 3985-3992 for the years 1382-1413. The 1386 payment to Sibilia, by then a widow, is recorded in ARV: P 2810, B. de la Mata: n.f. (20 September 1386). After 1387 the bailiff did not collect a single diner of the *aljama*'s annual tribute. In that year King Joan used the remaining 1,000 sous for the salary of Maria Marrades, the wet-nurse of Prince Jaume (ARV: MR 3986-3992; ACA: MR 1670: 2r-3r). Prince Jaume unfortunately died in 1388 at the age of four.

¹²⁸ Hinojosa, "Demografía," 282-283, provides the list of Jewish households, although he miscounts them (p. 277) and does not comment on the significance of the data. The *morabatí*, a tax granted to Jaume I in 1266 in exchange for a royal promise never to tamper with the coinage, had a set rate of 7 sous and was to be collected every seven years from every Christian and Muslim household owning property worth at least 105 sous (Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, 151-153). The Jews, however, were exempted from paying this tax; hence the collector simply recorded Jewish hearths. This information would have been useful for the crown.

¹²⁹ Hinojosa, "Demografía," 280. See chap. 1 for the 1355 data.

¹³⁰ The eighteen families were: Legem (three households), Çerruch, Barbut, Coffe (five households), Malaquí (four households), El Rau, Tavell, Toledano, Bonet, Adzaron (two households), Lobell, Passarell, Asseyo (two households), Ballester, Bubo, Avinaçara, Azamel, and Alolayx. It is possible, taking orthographic inconsistencies into account, that there were other returning families: Hiçan, perhaps a form of Façan (or Avenhaçan, Abenfazen); and Maymado, perhaps a form of Maymó.

in Morvedre in 1379 were members of families who had returned there sometime after September 1365.

That so many families should have wanted to go back home is in itself unremarkable. What is more worthy of comment is the resilience of these families and their ability to survive through the decades of upheaval beginning with the rebellion of the Union. The strategic dispersal of economic resources and the establishment of economic and social connections with Christians, Muslims, and Jews throughout the region provided them with a safety net of sorts in particularly hard times. Thus the devastation of Morvedre did not amount to economic disaster for some families because they had assets elsewhere; nor did expulsion from the town lead to vagrancy when they had relatives in other *jueries* or benevolent and self-interested seigneurs willing to receive them.¹³¹

When the Jews returned to Morvedre they did not cease this frequent movement back and forth between Morvedre and the towns and villages of the region; they did not change what had necessarily become for them a way of life. There were five Jews living in Morvedre between 1367 and 1377 whose family names were not even listed in 1379.¹³²

Despite the impressive number of returning families, the war had nonetheless taken a considerable toll on the *aljama* of Morvedre. Of the Jewish families resident in the town between 1352 and 1363 sixteen were absent in 1379. Some families had perhaps died out, like that of Bonjuhà Saladi, who left no male heirs. Others may have been among those sold into slavery by the Castilians; perhaps they never returned. Still others may have been the victims of marauding

¹³¹ There were, for example, Avinaçaras, Lobells, and Bonets in Castelló during the 1360s and 1370s—Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 104–105, 107–108, nos. 5, 10, 15.

¹³² The five were Jacob Façan, Abraham Abenrodric, Samuel Avincanes, Gençon Levi, and Abraham Mateix. Façan loaned money to a Christian couple in Castellnou, near Sogorb, in March 1377—Archivo Histórico Municipal de Segorbe: Varia, 240, notary Pere Martínez Soriano, Sign. C-4 [cited in F.J. Guerrero Carot, ed., *Archivo Histórico Municipal de Segorbe (1286–1910)* (Valencia, 1986)]. Perhaps he settled in Sogorb for a time, or in Castelló where he had relatives (Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 107–108, no. 15, for Alies Façan and Astruch Façan of Castelló). He later returned to Morvedre (see below). Abraham Mateix was licensed by the crown to work as a broker in 1375 (ACA: C 778: 130r); perhaps his dealings had taken him to Valencia by 1379. Avincanes perhaps moved to Vila-real where there was certainly a family branch established by 1383 (Doñate and Magdalena, *Three Jewish Communities*, 285, 292, no. 11).

soldiers and camp followers. In all likelihood, however, most of these sixteen families simply settled elsewhere, especially in the capital, their first stop after the Castilians ejected them from Morvedre.¹³³

This meant that the *aljama* needed and got new blood. In 1379 there were ten new families, who constituted twelve of the forty-one households.¹³⁴ A number of these families likely immigrated from Valencia's huge Jewish quarter; others perhaps came from smaller Valencian communities.

One result of the decades of flux was a changing of the guard in the *aljama*'s oligarchy. Some once influential families, such as the Aldectoris and the Cortovis, had passed from the scene. Others had fallen from power, like the Passarells and the Ballesters, who were still in Morvedre in 1379.¹³⁵ Even the Coffe clan was much diminished. Its wealthiest members had relocated to Valencia. Salamó, who would serve as councillor in 1404, was the last Coffe to inhabit Morvedre.¹³⁶ The Castilian war had obviously dealt some families a heavy blow; not all managed to recoup their losses in the period of reconstruction.

New families had risen to take their places. Three in particular had emerged as the dominant force in *aljama* politics by the 1380s: the el Raus, the Legems, and the Façans. From then until the accession

¹³³ The sixteen families were: Abenafia, Acrix, Alorqui, Baroglan, Bites, Cahal, Calabi, Exarqui, Loquens, Maymó, Moreno, Namem, Profer, Saladi, Salamó, and Vives. The large majority of these family names are listed among the Jews indemnified by the crown in January 1352; some, however, are mentioned only in other documents dating from the years 1348–1363.

¹³⁴ The ten families were: Hiçan (unless this is a form of Façan), Jucef, Abendara, Tello, Far, Axi (two households), Asio (two households), Maymado (unless this is a form of Maymó), Axauarqui, and Porporer.

¹³⁵ Jucef Ballester's house was sold in 1352 to satisfy a Christian creditor owed an annuity by the *aljama* (ACA: C 674: 25r–v). See Hinojosa, "Demografía," 282–283, for the households present in 1379. Neither family is referred to in relation to *aljama* politics in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (on which, see Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*). Neither family lived in Morvedre in 1409 (ARV: MR 11800).

¹³⁶ The appendix to Hinojosa, "Préstamo judío," 327–333, lists various members of the Coffe clan as residents of Valencia between 1354 and 1391. One, Salamó ben Jahudà, was a resident of Llíria. (See also, L. Tolosa Robledo, "Usureros judíos en la Valencia del siglo XIV," in *Ir. Col·loqui d'història dels jueus a la Corona d'Aragó* [Lleida, 1991], 297.) On 11 September 1391 King Joan licensed Isaac and Astruc Coffe of Valencia to travel, with their "macips juheus," to Tudela, Navarre "per alguns lurs affers" (ACA: C 1901: 73r). Given what had happened in Valencia in July, they were probably arranging a permanent move to Tudela. ACA: C 2339: 160r–161r (28 August 1404) lists Salamó Coffe as one of the Morvedre councillors. There were no Coffes in Morvedre by 1409 (ARV: MR 11800).

of Alfonso IV in 1416 the political life of the community would center on these three families.¹³⁷

Samuel el Rau was a fairly successful moneylender at the time of the Union's revolt, but he did not play much of a role in communal government.¹³⁸ His son David was far more prosperous, the "biggest taxpayer" in the *aljama* at the time of his death in 1404. He made his fortune with investments in moneylending, tax farming, and maritime commerce. Meora Avinaçara's choice of David as the guardian of his son Isaac was indicative of the esteem in which other prominent families held him. David served as *sindic* of the *aljama* in 1386 and was a councillor at the time of his death.¹³⁹

A family of perhaps middling wealth in 1348, the Legems steadily improved their position thereafter.¹⁴⁰ Together with Aaron Coffe, Jahudà Legem was appointed by the *aljama* as messenger to the royal court in 1359.¹⁴¹ A man of considerable financial acumen, he was farming all crown rents in Morvedre by 1382; in 1386 he served as communal treasurer. His son Samuel was elected *adelantat* in 1397, 1401, and 1404.¹⁴²

Originally from Teruel, Jacob Façan settled in Morvedre after the Castilian withdrawal. He had first come to Valencia, in the service

¹³⁷ See Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*.

¹³⁸ In 1352 Samuel was indemnified for the 1,500 sous the Unionists had stolen from him. See chap. 4, n. 87, for examples of his lending activity.

¹³⁹ ACA: C 813: 33r-v (14 November 1379); and C 815: 129r-130r (17 October 1380) treat the complaints of Meora's widow, Sol, that despite the fact that Meora had in his will given her usufruct of the property he left to his son, David el Rau, as Isaac's *curator*, was unreasonably demanding that she render accounts of her administration of the property. ARV: P 2810, B. de la Mata: n.f. (20 September 1386) where David, in his capacity as *sindic*, sells a *censal* to dona Sibilia Boil; and ACA: C 2339: 160r-161r (28 August 1404), where he is listed as a councillor, though deceased. The evidence on office-holding is fragmentary; he had no doubt held other posts over the years. For more on David and his family, see Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*.

¹⁴⁰ ACA: C 649: 191r (5 February 1348) treats the complaint of Jacob Legem—the first Legem I have encountered—about heavy taxation, which suggests that he was a man of some substance.

¹⁴¹ ACA: C 698: 35v-36r (13 May 1359).

¹⁴² ARV: MR 3985: M. 1, 1r-v (1382); M. 2, 1r-v (1383); M. 3, 1r-v (1384); and M. 5, 1r-v (1386), show Jahudà farming royal taxes in Morvedre for sums ranging from 21,000 to 29,000 sous. He was probably involved in this activity earlier. Unfortunately there are no extant accounts of the local bailiff for the years before 1382. ARV: P 2810, B. de la Mata: n.f. (20 September 1386) for Jahudà as *clavari*. ACA: C 2114: 40r-v (11 July 1397); ARV: P 1446, B. de la Mata: n.f. (29 August 1401); and ACA: C 2339: 160r-161r (28 August 1404) for Samuel as *adelantat*. See Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, for more on this family.

of King Pere and Prince Joan, when his hometown surrendered to the Castilians.¹⁴³ Moneylending made him rich; only David el Rau surpassed him among the Jews of Morvedre.¹⁴⁴ He was elected *adelantat* in 1390 and councillor in 1404.¹⁴⁵

Though its own composition was changing, the elite of wealthy families had, since 1348, tightened its grip on the reins of *aljama* government, giving almost no role to representatives from the lower classes. The community's need, during the decades of tumult, for leaders who possessed reserves of wealth and who were well connected with powerful Christians had enhanced the authority of the affluent. Poor families could not have subsisted through the three years between the assault of the Union and the king's indemnification of the victimized—nearly the entire community—without the assistance of the well-to-do. In 1358, when the whole community, in an impressive display of solidarity, marched out of Morvedre to protest King Pere's incessant taxation, it was led by the elite families. Only the elites had the political astuteness to sense the king's vulnerability, only they had assiduously cultivated relationships with the seigneurs of the region, and therefore only they could have persuaded all their fellows to gamble and leave Morvedre for seigneurial villages. Again, in the period of reconstruction following the Castilian occupation, it was men from the leading families who negotiated with King Pere and Queen Elionor the conditions for the community's resettlement. Frequent communication between communal leaders and the prudent queen was fundamental to the *aljama's* recovery prior to 1391.

¹⁴³ ACA: C 1906: 64r–66r (10 May 1393) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 451; and Hinojosa, *Jews*, no. 164]. Among the charges against Jacob listed here, one states that he was formerly resident in Teruel where he allegedly had given a false oath against one "Yzmael," his mother's uncle. The uncle was probably Ismael Toledano of Teruel; Jacob was still embroiled in a lawsuit with him in 1391 (ACA: C 1847: 100r; and C 1848: 45r). ACA: C 1614: 98v–99r (23 February 1367) concerns the pleas of "Jacob, filius Rabi David quondam, judeus oriundus dicte civitatis [Teruel], nunc vero comorans in villa Muriveteris" regarding the property and credit instruments he lost in Teruel while in the king's service in Valencia. I believe that this is Jacob Façan, particularly in light of his connections with the royal family, on which see Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*.

¹⁴⁴ ACA: C 1986: 14r (21 February 1387) offers some sense of the extent of Jacob's credit operations. Here the king grants the municipality of Altura an *elongamentum* on the payment of whatever debts it owes Jacob up to the quantity of 5,000 sous.

¹⁴⁵ ACA: C 1906: 64r–66r for his alleged actions as *adelantat*; and C 2339: 160r–161r, where he is listed as councillor. See also Meyerson, *Jewish Renaissance*, for more on the activities of Jacob and the Façan family.

In 1383, almost eighteen years after King Pere had begun to rebuild Morvedre, Prince Joan finally provided for the election of a formal council to administer communal affairs along with the *adelantats*. But the prince did not even broach the issue of class representation. Every two years the local bailiff and the *adelantats*, whose number was not specified, were to choose ten councillors. Two of the ten could be *adelantats* themselves.¹⁴⁶

The wealthy oligarchs, however, had not been neglecting the needs of the poor. Sometime prior to 1391, perhaps as early as the 1350s, the *aljama*, with the crucial support of the well-to-do, established confraternities for caring for the sick, burying the dead, and teaching poor boys.¹⁴⁷ Still, with the period of reconstruction over and the community's families firmly rooted in Morvedre, the lower classes wanted more than charity; they demanded a voice in government. In 1383 Prince Joan ignored them, as if the largely repopulated *jueria* did not include families from different economic strata. Their growing discontent eventually caused the "failure of the council," and moved Joan, now king, to modify the electoral regime in 1390.

According to the new system, each year on 1 May the *adelantats* were to meet with the councillors to elect two new *adelantats*, a "third" (*tercer*), who was to be the associate or adjunct of the two, and a communal treasurer (*clavari*). After taking an oath before the council to serve the *aljama* well and legally, the four newly elected officials were to withdraw and choose twelve councillors, four from each class. The councillors had a three-year term in office. None of these officials could serve consecutive terms and none, in any given term, could be closely related—father and son, father-in-law and son-in-law, or brothers.¹⁴⁸ This system could not bring an end to oligarchy and the politics of patronage—such was not its purpose—but it did enable the lower classes to make themselves heard again and for the more successful among them possibly to climb into the ranks of the

¹⁴⁶ ACA: C 1688: 32r-v (4 March 1383) [Baer, *Die Juden*, 1: no. 353].

¹⁴⁷ ACA: C 2338: 157v (9 December 1402) [Hinojosa, *Jews*, no. 269]. Here Queen Maria was permitting the reestablishment of these confraternities which had existed for quite a long time (*a tanto tempore citra*) before 1391. Although documents prior to 1348 mention the "almonry" of the *aljama*, there are not, as far as I know, any specific references to these confraternities. Perhaps the Black Death itself and subsequent plagues precipitated their formation. On the other hand, it is by no means impossible that prior to 1348 the "almonry" had directed funds to these confraternities.

¹⁴⁸ ACA: C 1898: 140r-141r (1 December 1390).

ruling elite. The process of reconstruction was now completed in every way.

* * *

Lay and ecclesiastical officials in the capital, under whose jurisdiction Morvedre now fell, had been viewing the growing Jewish communities in both their city and Morvedre with mixed feelings which at times verged on alarm. The growth of the Jewish population in Valencia resulted not from any special immunity to epidemic disease but from the immigration of Jews from other towns, like Xàtiva, Alzira, and Morvedre, before, during, and after the Castilian war.¹⁴⁹ An increasing Jewish presence in Morvedre was of course relative to the postwar emptiness of its *jueria*. The perception that the Jewish population was burgeoning bothered these officials because it fed their main anxiety that the Christian population was diminishing. The governors of Valencia had long been preoccupied with demographic questions and linked the city's commercial prosperity and political preeminence to a necessary increase in the size of its Christian population. In their view, outbreaks of plague in 1362, 1374, and 1380, combined with the effects of the Castilian war, threatened to sap Valencia's prosperity and power.¹⁵⁰ They interpreted these afflictions as signs of divine disfavor and as punishments for the sins of the Christian populace.

To avert divine chastisement, urban elites deemed it essential to distance Christians from all temptations and all sources of sin. After receiving news that pestilence had struck Catalonia, in November 1370 the *Consell* of Valencia organized processions to beseech God to cease the torment of Catalonia and to spare the kingdom of Valencia.¹⁵¹ Then, in the Corts of Valencia the following year, urban representatives complained that the Jews, especially those in the capital, were living outside of the Jewish quarters and thereby increasing the likelihood of Christian sin. They persuaded the king to command the removal of Jews to "separate and closed" quarters in every city and town.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Some examples of Jewish immigrants from Xàtiva and Alzira are ACA: C 1580: 94v (10 December 1371); C 1581: 98r; C 1587: 43v (May 1379); C 815: 131r-v (November 1380); and C 2029: 161r-v (1 May 1391).

¹⁵⁰ Rubio, "Ideologia burgesa."

¹⁵¹ Rubio, *Peste negra*, 33-34.

¹⁵² ACA: C 811: 8v-9r (15 July 1380). Before treating the same issue in 1380,

Morvedre, of course, already had a well defined and walled *jue-ria*. Given its recent and still incomplete repopulation, very few Jews were likely to have been buying or renting homes in the town's Christian neighborhoods. Fear of plague nonetheless heightened the attention that municipal officials gave to Christian transgressions, whether committed with Christians or with non-Christians. In the fall of 1370 the bailiff sought to establish a house for prostitutes far from where "honest" folk lived.¹⁵³ The following year he collected a fine of 1,100 sous from a local Jew who had slept with a Christian woman.¹⁵⁴ Maintaining a healthy distance between Jewish men and all Christian women, whatever their moral status, and between pious Christians and dissolute prostitutes was part of the plague prevention plan.

Although Catalonia was repeatedly hit with bouts of plague between 1370 and 1373, the kingdom of Valencia was spared. In 1374–75 and in 1380, however, Valencians were less fortunate. In July 1380, one month after the plague claimed its first victims, the municipal government of Valencia informed the king that being spared the divine rod between 1370 and 1373 had not been the result of an effective separation of Jewish dwellings from Christian ones, for the bailiff general had done little in this respect. King Pere enjoined the bailiff to take the appropriate measures this time.¹⁵⁵ If the Jews were consequently confined in Valencia or elsewhere in the kingdom, it was at best a temporary expedient and an ineffective one at that.

Spasmodic efforts to restrict Jews, Muslims, prostitutes, and gamblers had since 1348 become an almost ritual response to epidemic disease or the threat thereof. The civil and ecclesiastical authorities spoke only of isolating what they perceived to be the sources and sites of Christian transgression; they were not calling for the eradication of Jews, Muslims, or prostitutes. The Christian populace, in

this document recounts the proceedings of the Corts in 1371, including their request that "con [sic] en alcunes de les dites viles e lochs los juheus no esten justats, apartats ne closes, perço sia merce de vos senyor [King Pere] provehir que aytals juheus sien constrets de estar justats a una part de la vila o del loch apartats e closes, les quals partida e clausura les sien donades e fetes a coneguda del batle e jurats d'aquella vila o loch."

¹⁵³ ACA: C 1579: 82r (1 September 1370).

¹⁵⁴ ACA: MR 498: 44r (December 1371).

¹⁵⁵ ACA: C 811: 8v–9r. Rubio, *Peste negra*, 33–46, for the outbreaks of plague in Valencia in the final decades of the fourteenth century.

any case, maintained the desired social distance and resisted temptation only irregularly.¹⁵⁶

More serious official discussions regarding the confinement of the Jews, however, persisted in the capital. There the Jewish community was spilling over the boundaries of the *jueria* into Christian parishes. The contrast between the overflowing Jewish quarter and the vacancies in some Christian parishes hit hard by the plague distressed the municipal authorities. They resorted to a variety of expedients to deal with the problem. In 1381, for instance, in order to finance renovation of the parish church of Sant Thomàs, they took the unusual step of taxing the Jews who had moved into the parish. At the same time, loose women were ejected from the parish, no doubt to inhibit their contact with both Jewish and Christian men.¹⁵⁷ In 1387, while the rectors of several parishes remonstrated about the deleterious effects that an increased Jewish presence was having on Christian worship, word reached the king of the "scandals" ensuing from the residence of Christians in the *jueria*.¹⁵⁸ All this led royal and city officials in 1390 to plan the amplification and more secure delimitation of the Jewish quarter. The local Dominicans protested against the expansion of the *jueria*, as did the guild of Christian tailors, wary of competition from a greater concentration of their Jewish counterparts.¹⁵⁹

Troubled as civil and church officials in the capital were by the Jewish population mushrooming around them, they not surprisingly grew alarmed when, in 1383, the Jews of Morvedre began extensive renovations of their synagogue. This was a symbolically charged display of the Jewish community's renewed vigor and, for ecclesiastical authorities in the capital, an unsettling contrast to the stalled

¹⁵⁶ In Morvedre, for instance, the Jew David Abraham "habuit rem carnalem cum mulieribus christianis," or so King Joan was informed (ACA: C 1973: 61r [7 September 1387]).

¹⁵⁷ ACA: C 817: 147r-148r (7 August 1381) for the parish church; and C 818: 75v-76r (6 August 1381) for the loose women.

¹⁵⁸ ACA: C 1827: 17v-19r for the rectors' complaints; and C 1830: 146v (18 December 1387) regarding Christians in the *jueria*.

¹⁵⁹ E. Vidal Beltrán, *Valencia en la época de Juan I* (Valencia, 1974), 17-19; and *Epistolari de la València medieval*, ed. A. Rubio Vela, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1985-98), 1: 85-86, no. 12, which has an interesting reference to "I carrer o azuzach qui devalla del carrer de Sent Thomàs vers Sent Johan de l'Epital, com fos tot poblat de juheus—foragitats los christians." A. García, "La crisis del siglo XIV valenciano y Bonifacio Ferrer," in *Estudios de Historia de Valencia* (Valencia, 1978), 84-85, for the complaints of the Dominicans and the tailors.

work on the town's church of Santa Maria, the curacy of the archdeacon.¹⁶⁰ Arnau Bonfill, the vicar of the bishop, whose permission the Jews needed to renovate the synagogue, thus had second thoughts after having authorized the Jews to proceed on 4 March. Anxious that the Jews had deceived him with their story of the loss of the synagogue's foundation charter during the Castilian occupation and wondering whether the Jews had ever had the right to build a synagogue in the first place, on 16 March Bonfill ordered the local curate and bailiff to close up the synagogue and to deny the Jews entry until he could explore the matter further. Meanwhile, local Christians were to be forbidden all contact with the Jews. Further discussion with the rabbi and the *adelantats* and personal inspection of the synagogue allayed the vicar's suspicions. On 18 March he gave the Jews license to carry out the renovations, as long as they did not enlarge the synagogue.¹⁶¹

The vicar had acted primarily to assuage his own anxiety, not in response to the complaints of local Christians.¹⁶² Neither the town fathers nor the lesser folk of Morvedre seem to have shared the concerns of Valencia's governors regarding Jewish demographic expansion, mainly because their town's demographic profile was so different from that of the capital. In the years following the devastating Castilian occupation, Morvedre needed all the warm bodies it could get. Besides, most of the Jews were returnees—familiar faces, unlike some of the Christian immigrants. And perhaps most importantly, as far as municipal officials were concerned, the Jews were now paying many municipal taxes along with the rest of the townspeople.

¹⁶⁰ Chabret, *Sagunto*, 1: 327–328, and 2: 238–247. Work on the church did not start again until 1431.

¹⁶¹ Archivo Diocesano de Valencia: Sección I. Fondo II. Visitas pastorales. Caja 132, 9v (4 March 1383), 11r (16 March), and 5v, 6v, 7r, 8v, 9v, 10r (18 March) [*Visitas pastorales*, nos. 104, 119, and 128]. See also Hinojosa, "Sinagogas valencianas," 303–305.

¹⁶² This does not mean that relations between Jews and Christians in Morvedre were completely placid in regard to religious issues. In 1378 *aljama* officials reported that, as usual, "propter lamentationes in memoriam passionis redemptoris nostri per christi fideles fieri consuetas, . . . ipsius aljame singulares reclusi consistunt." The officials were complaining not because local Christians were doing something new or unusual on Good Friday but because the local justice was demanding an immoderate salary for guarding the Jewish quarter (ACA: C 932: 52v–53r [14 April]).

Though under the jurisdiction of Valencia, Morvedre remained a distinct entity with its own history and interests. Its political elites continually struggled to break free of the capital's domination.¹⁶³ They were not about to follow Valencia's lead in Jewish affairs or in any other matter. This turned out to be a blessing for the Jews of Morvedre in the summer of 1391.

¹⁶³ See, for example, Vidal, *Valencia*, 241–242, on the hostility pervading relations between Valencia and Morvedre from 1390 to 1392.

CONCLUSION

The summer of 1391 was a turning-point for the Jews of Christian Spain. The attacks of Christian mobs on most Jewish communities in Castile and the Crown of Aragon caused the death of hundreds, if not thousands of Jews, and resulted in the forced baptism of many more. The violence first erupted in Seville on 4 June, provoked by the vituperative anti-Jewish preaching of Ferrant Martínez, the archdeacon of Ecija. Christians in Seville and other urban centers were easily swayed by the harangues of Martínez, since they had been exposed for decades to the anti-Jewish propaganda disseminated by the noble opponents of the Castilian monarchy. The violence then spread rapidly throughout Andalucía and New and Old Castile. Word of events in Castile, which were unprecedented in their scope and effect, quickly reached Christians in the lands of the Crown of Aragon and gave them the sense that a new world without Jews was in the offing. On 9 July a band of Christian youths marched on the Jewish quarter of Valencia “shouting that the archdeacon of Castile [Ferrant Martínez] is coming and that all the Jews should be baptized or die.” They were soon joined by many others, including rabble-rousers from Castile. The mob killed perhaps 230 Jews and forced most of the rest to receive baptism. Of the approximately 2,500 members of Valencia’s great *aljama* only some 200 escaped baptism or death. Similar events transpired in other Valencian towns over the next couple of weeks. Only the Jews of Morvedre escaped the violence, on account of the efforts of the bailiff, Bonafonat de Sant Feliu, and local knightly families who evacuated them to the castle. In August the wave of religious violence swept over the Jewish communities of Catalonia and Palma de Mallorca. The presence of King Joan in the kingdom of Aragon helped to save most of its Jewish population from Christian mobs who wished to follow the example of their Castilian, Valencian, and Catalan coreligionists.

The consequences of the 1391 violence were of great significance in the long term. In both Castile and the Crown of Aragon the converted Jews and their descendants—the *conversos*—formed large, dynamic, and often upwardly mobile populations. By the mid-fifteenth century leading *conversos* in many cities and towns, especially in

Andalucía and New Castile, were embroiled in explosive conflict with Old Christian rivals. Throughout Christian Spain a good number of *converso* families persisted in their Jewish beliefs and practices. The social and religious tensions surrounding the *conversos* and the manifest Judaizing of some of them presented challenges that neither monarchy nor church could long ignore. In 1478 Isabel I of Castile and Fernando II of Aragon took the decisive step of establishing a “Spanish” Inquisition in both their realms to eradicate the Judaizing *conversos*. After the inquisitors revealed that Jews frequently abetted the Jewish practices of *conversos* clinging to Judaism, Isabel and Fernando decided to remove this nefarious Jewish influence on New Christians by expelling all Jews in 1492.

On the face of it, the violence of 1391 and the expulsion of 1492 were of a piece with the anti-Jewish actions and expulsions that had taken place elsewhere in western Europe. All were consistent with the inevitable movement of western European states toward legal and religious uniformity. Moved by piety and sensitive to the demands of Christian subjects who saw themselves as belonging to the mystical body of Christ, Europe’s self-styled “most Christian” kings—or, in the case of Fernando and Isabel, *reyes católicos*—were compelled to come to grips with the Jewish problem, often first by suppressing the Jews’ evil usury and then by eliminating the Jews themselves, one way or another.

Through a superficial consideration of the history of the Jews of Morvedre between the late thirteenth century and 1391, one could chart an inexorable deterioration of the Jews’ condition and see it as part of the general progression to expulsion. In 1283 popular Christian outcry forced King Pere II to remove the Jews from government office. At the same time, Christian laity and clergy, moved by a profound sense of Christian *communitas* and Eucharistic devotion, worked to degrade and humiliate the Jews in other ways. The bishops of Valencia campaigned against Jewish usury and increased the animosity that Christian debtors felt toward their Jewish creditors. All this simmering anti-Jewish sentiment was brought to a boil by the Black Death, exploding in the Valencian Union’s attack on the Jews of Morvedre in November 1348. Subsequent efforts by municipal governments to segregate the Jews when plague threatened were expressions of popular anti-Judaism. Segregation was but a step on the road to the elimination of the Jews through violence and expulsion. Meanwhile, the monarchy’s heavy taxation of the

Jews had largely exhausted the financial resources of the *aljama* of Morvedre and other *aljamas*. By the late fourteenth century the Jews were of far less importance to the royal treasury. When the expulsion of the remaining Jews finally occurred in 1492, the crown would not lose too much.

The closer inspection of the evidence undertaken in the preceding chapters, however, points to different conclusions. Pere II did indeed succumb to popular pressure in his dismissal of Jewish officials, and Christians were ideologically motivated to humiliate the Jews and put them in their inferior place. But all this was not the beginning of a relentless decline in Jewish-Christian relations, the first ripple of the growing waves of anti-Judaism that would inevitably engulf the kingdom in the summer of 1391. Instead, once Christians had put Jews where they wanted them, once they had fixed the Jews in a patently inferior position, they were content. Establishing a socio-religious order with themselves on top, and Jews and Muslims below them, was sufficient. In the kingdom of Valencia religious discrimination and even ghettoization were not synonymous with a movement toward religious uniformity.

Christian violence against Jews was infrequent. The Valencian Union's attack on the Jews of Morvedre was not a manifestation of widespread popular ill will; nor did it have much to do with the Black Death which had just afflicted the kingdom. The rebel Unionists targeted the Jews because of the social and political position they occupied: they were the king's special "treasure" and they had strong ties to royalist noble and knightly families. Even so, the Unionists never made anti-Judaism a central part of their anti-monarchical program or propaganda; ridding the realm of Jews was not one of the goals of their failed revolt.

Nor was it an objective of the municipalities whose representatives in the Corts urged the segregation of the Jews, in order to ensure that Christians would not sin with them and thereby incur divine chastisement in the form of plague. Segregation was an end in itself, another way of putting the Jews in their place, or special space, for specific religious and hygienic purposes. It was in any case an ineffective or, at best, temporary measure. Christian sin would continue to be one of the risks of mingling with Jews.

Jewish moneylending was, to be sure, a persistent source of tension between the Christian and Jewish communities. Yet tensions peaked in the early fourteenth century with the anti-usury campaigns

of Bishop Ramon Despont. Subsequently litigation and friction were by no means unknown, but most credit transactions between Jewish lenders and their Christian (and Muslim) clients proceeded regularly and without controversy. Throughout the fourteenth century the monarchy consistently upheld the right of Jewish lenders to charge interest, as long as they did not exceed the set royal rate. More concerned with the economic needs of their Christian subjects and with maintaining the flow of Jewish revenue into their treasury, the rulers of the Crown of Aragon were not, as were English and French kings, given to making pious displays of stamping out Jewish usury. They did, however, support the bishops in their efforts to halt Christian usury. As monarchs of pluralistic kingdoms in which each religious group had its place and function, they did not feel that allowing the Jews to provide credit compromised their Christian identity and image.

Besides, in the later fourteenth century the “problem” of Jewish usury was beginning to be resolved, not through royal initiative but through the forces of economic change. With the introduction of new credit mechanisms—the *censal* and the *violari*—Christian *censalistas* were gradually displacing the Jews as the principal purveyors of credit. Credit issues would eventually cease to be a major source of tension between Jews and Christians, though the full effects of this shift in the locus of financial power were not felt until the fifteenth century.

The Jews were in fact becoming, from the perspective of the monarchy, less useful. Their role in regional credit markets was diminishing; the treasuries of their *aljamas* were, after decades of heavy royal taxation, seriously depleted while other sources of revenue were becoming far more significant for the royal fisc. Less useful Jews were, it would seem, eminently expendable ones, particularly if kings could earn points in the eyes of their Christian subjects and of certain elements in the church by converting or ejecting the Jews. Yet this was not how the rulers of the Crown of Aragon approached the question of the Jews. The Crown of Aragon was not England or France; it was not even Castile.

Tradition weighed heavily on the Crown of Aragon’s monarchs: the tradition of acknowledging and working with the distinct laws, customs, and institutions of each one of the Crown’s federated kingdoms and principalities; the tradition of ruling over adherents of three religions. The kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon housed not

only Christian and Jewish communities but also huge Muslim populations. (The Muslim population of Catalonia was very small in comparison.) All three religious groups had been there from the beginning, since the time of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century conquests; they were fixtures of, organically embedded in the social landscape. The pluralistic social order in the kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon bore strong resemblance to societies in medieval Islamdom, where, as Mark Cohen observes, a member of a minority group could “cross boundaries to participate in a wide range of activities along with the dominant . . . group so long as he behave[d] according to his lowly rank.” In Valencia and Aragon, “the presence of” Muslims and Jews “in a marginal situation *within* the hierarchy” dominated by Christians “constitute[d] a structural feature of its social order.”¹ The kings of Aragon and Valencia, however, did not borrow the *dhimma* model from the Muslims. Initially, they simply acted out of political and economic necessity, but what began as ad hoc post-conquest or colonial arrangements became elemental to Valencian and Aragonese societies. The pluralistic societies that emerged were not divinely sanctioned in the way that the Islamic *dhimma* system was; indeed, the ideological currents that contributed to the religious homogenization of other parts of Latin Christendom were felt in Valencia and Aragon and did create problems for Muslims and Jews. Nevertheless, the Christians who were born and raised in these kingdoms and the kings who ruled over them operated with different social assumptions, different from those prevalent in, say, England and France. They did not think in terms of a world without Muslims and Jews; they did not imagine it or strive for it.

Thus monarchs right up to and including Fernando II (d. 1516) were always unwilling to expel or forcibly convert their many Muslim subjects in Aragon and Valencia; and they never did. True, Fernando did decide to expel the Jews, but only after being convinced that this was the best way to solve the problem of the *conversos*’ Judaizing heresy, a heresy which was corrupting Catholic society from the inside and bringing disorder to the long-established pluralistic social order. Fernando never planned to homogenize his kingdoms (though his wife Isabel may well have had other plans for her Castile).² In

¹ Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 113.

² Meyerson, “Religious Change, Regionalism, and Royal Power.”

other words, for rulers and subjects in Valencia and Aragon social traditions died hard.

More to the point in regard to the pre-1391 period, when Pere III realized that his Jewish subjects were now worth less as sources of tax revenue, he did not contemplate expelling them. The Jews had always been there. They were still productive, still paid some taxes, and still pertained to the royal patrimony, which he, like his predecessors, jealously guarded. Pere was therefore keen to reestablish a Jewish community in Morvedre after he recovered the shattered town from the Castilians. He knew that the Jews would help the Christians to rebuild the town and revitalize its economy, even if they would not be paying him or his queen, Elionor, large subsidies.

The Christians of Morvedre also welcomed the Jews back for the same reasons. They did not take advantage of the fact that the Jews had been expelled from the town to insist that the Jews not be readmitted. There had always been a Jewish *aljama* in Morvedre; naturally the Jews would return. Not only would they return, but, by virtue of the agreement of 1370, the Jews would now be a more integral part of the urban commonwealth. The Jews would now pay the same municipal taxes as the Christians. The *aljama* would no longer be a completely separate corporation beholden only to the monarchy. Though the Jews were less useful as the royal milch cows, they could still contribute to local economies. For King Pere and his Christian subjects, this was fine.

In the eyes of the rulers of the Crown of Aragon, Jews did not appear as they apparently did to French and English kings: as usurers to be imported, exploited, condemned, and converted or expelled (and sometimes readmitted and ejected again). The monarchs and great lords of England and France seem always to have viewed the Jews not just as subjects of a different, inferior faith, but as foreigners, infidel foreigners who would perform the unsavory task of lending money at interest. Eventually, the Jews' occupation—usury—proved to be so distasteful that it offended the religious scruples of these “most Christian” kings and nobles, who therefore, in fits and starts, suppressed Jewish usury and then fleeced and exiled the far less useful Jews. Among the rulers of England and France in the thirteenth century a culture of manipulating and expelling Jews developed, a culture in which ejecting the nefarious, usurious Jews, and affirming the *christianitas* of one's monarchy and one's realm in the bargain, became a policy option, frequently considered and often

enough executed. (Later, German princes and cities, and still later, their counterparts in Italy would handle Jews in similar, manipulative fashion.) In England and most of France (the Mediterranean south excepted) Jews were never given an opportunity to do anything much other than lend money. Louis IX, for example, clamped down on Jewish usury and imagined that Jews could survive by providing goods and services only to other Jews, not to Christians. The Jews were not given a chance to integrate in a diversified manner into the economic life of the kingdom. In England, after Edward I outlawed Jewish usury in 1275, some Jews in a number of regions did develop successful alternative economic strategies, particularly investment in the commodities trade. For others, however, it was not economically feasible to abandon moneylending so abruptly; besides, many Christians still needed their services. In any case, by expelling the Jews in 1290 Edward prevented them from gradually and effectively diversifying, from becoming anything other than what they had long been for the monarchy: foreign, usurious milch cows.³

The rulers of the Crown of Aragon did not play the same political and religious games with their Jewish populations; they did not ponder the expulsion of the Jews as policy option and pious gesture. Their Jewish communities were, like the Jews of Morvedre, engaged in a much wider range of economic pursuits than most western European Jewries (Mediterranean France again being the exception). Moneylending was certainly an important occupation, but along with a variety of crafts, agriculture, and retail commerce, it was only one of many. Thus when Christian *censalisitas* replaced the Jews as the key players in regional credit networks, the Jews gradually shifted their investments from loans into tax farming, industry, commerce, and so on. Their kings gave them the time to adjust. The kings recognized that the Jews were not just eminently taxable moneylenders who could be easily removed from local economies. The Jews played a much more diversified economic role; eliminating them was therefore a complicated, messy business. Moreover, the elimination of the

³ My comments on the Jewish policies of French and English monarchies are based mainly on Jordan, *French Monarchy and the Jews*; R. Mundill, *England's Jewish Solution: Experiment and Expulsion, 1262–1290* (Cambridge, 1998); and Stow, *Alienated Minority*, 273–308. There is no point in reproducing here the many works on which these masterly studies have drawn.

Jews would not have left the kings of Valencia and Aragon or their kingdoms appearing any more Christian. There were still tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Muslims. For the rulers of the Crown of Aragon, bringing about uniformity, creating "one people," would have entailed dealing with both Muslims and Jews. The social and economic costs of such an enterprise would have been far too high. They did not dream of it. They did not live in the same social world as Louis and Philip of France and Edward of England.

Still, the world of King Joan I was seriously shaken when Christian mobs attacked Jewish communities in the summer of 1391 in Valencia, Catalonia, and Aragon. This explosion of violence is not easy to explain. Of course the Christians of these regions had long harbored anti-Jewish, and anti-Muslim, sentiments; it would be folly to assert otherwise. They, and their Jewish and Muslim neighbors, had, however, developed ways of coping, ways of living with ideological antagonism. In the years and months preceding July 1391 the kingdom of Valencia had seen the usual tensions and anxieties surrounding the Jews, but nothing unusual, nothing suggesting that Christian mobs would descend on its Jewish communities calling for the Jews' baptism or death. What was new and unprecedented was the effort initiated by Ferrant Martínez in Castile to create, with chrism and sword, a different society without Jews. News of the rapidly spreading violence in Andalucía and Castile sparked the imagination of some Christians in the lands of the Crown of Aragon. Only some were needed to agitate, to gather a mob, and to whip the mob into a murderous and/or proselytizing frenzy. The salient point is that the violence originated in Castile. It would not likely have started in Valencia, Catalonia, or Aragon without the Castilian example.

Although also a realm of three religions, Castile was significantly different from the Crown of Aragon, in terms of political culture and social composition. There were very few Muslims in Castile, perhaps 20,000 in a population of over five million. Castilian Christians were not terribly concerned about Muslims, or if they were, they focused on the Muslims living across the frontier in the Nasrid sultanate of Granada. Castilian Mudejars were not a topic of much discussion or controversy. Castilian Jews, however, were—very much so. Indeed, Castilian Christians directed their animus primarily at Jews. The Jews were an obvious target because they performed for the royal government many of the functions that socially ambitious

Christians deprecated—administering royal finances and farming taxes. Jews also practiced usury and were not being displaced by *censalistas*, since the *censal* had not been introduced into Castile. No matter that the majority of Jews was not involved in such activities, it was enough for the monarchy's noble opposition that there were a few highly placed Jewish financiers at the royal court. Thus when Enrique de Trastámara led the nobility in an ultimately successful revolt against King Pedro I, he was able to inflame popular outrage against the king and the Jews by lambasting the king and his Jewish advisors for their rapacity and cruelty. Enrique had thereby created an expectation among Castilians that he would have no Jews in his government. Yet when he seized the crown in 1369, he too found that he needed Jewish advisors and financiers, as did his successors. This remained a sore point with Castilians, as the protests of the Castilian Cortes and sermons reveal. When Ferrant Martínez began his anti-Jewish preaching in 1378 he was building on a virulent strain of politically motivated anti-Judaism which had long been part of Castilian public discourse.

In the lands of the Crown of Aragon—particularly Valencia and Aragon—Muslims were numerous and were a subject of public discussion. Christians sometimes fretted about alleged Mudejar conspiracies with North African and Granadan Muslims while nobles lobbied either to protect or to restrict the mobility of their Mudejar peasant vassals. The Mudejars, in other words, shared the spotlight with the Jews and were also targets of Christian hostility. Or, from a more optimistic perspective, it could be said that Aragonese and Valencian Christians were more accustomed to dealing with difference; demographic and social realities required them to make adjustments and compromises that few Christians elsewhere in western Europe would ever have contemplated. Furthermore, when powerful subjects of the Crown of Aragon's rulers wished to challenge them, they did so, as has been seen with the Union rebellions, in constitutionalist terms. They did not resort to, or stoop to, the crude anti-Jewish harangues utilized by Castilians. The violence of 1391, then, was not a continuation of or an outgrowth of earlier developments.

The events of 1391 were not necessarily the beginning of the end for the Jews of Christian Spain, even in Castile. In both realms some Jewish communities would revive and prosper. The Jewish community in Morvedre would experience something of a renaissance in

terms of demographic and economic expansion and the cultivation of benign and fruitful relations with the Christians and Muslims of the region. For the Jews of Morvedre, 1391 would prove to be not so much the beginning of the end—that is, the beginning of a precipitous decline—but the end of a long beginning.

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